

DEL COURT

ARLESTON • BARBUCCI

7

الزراعة

Enkō



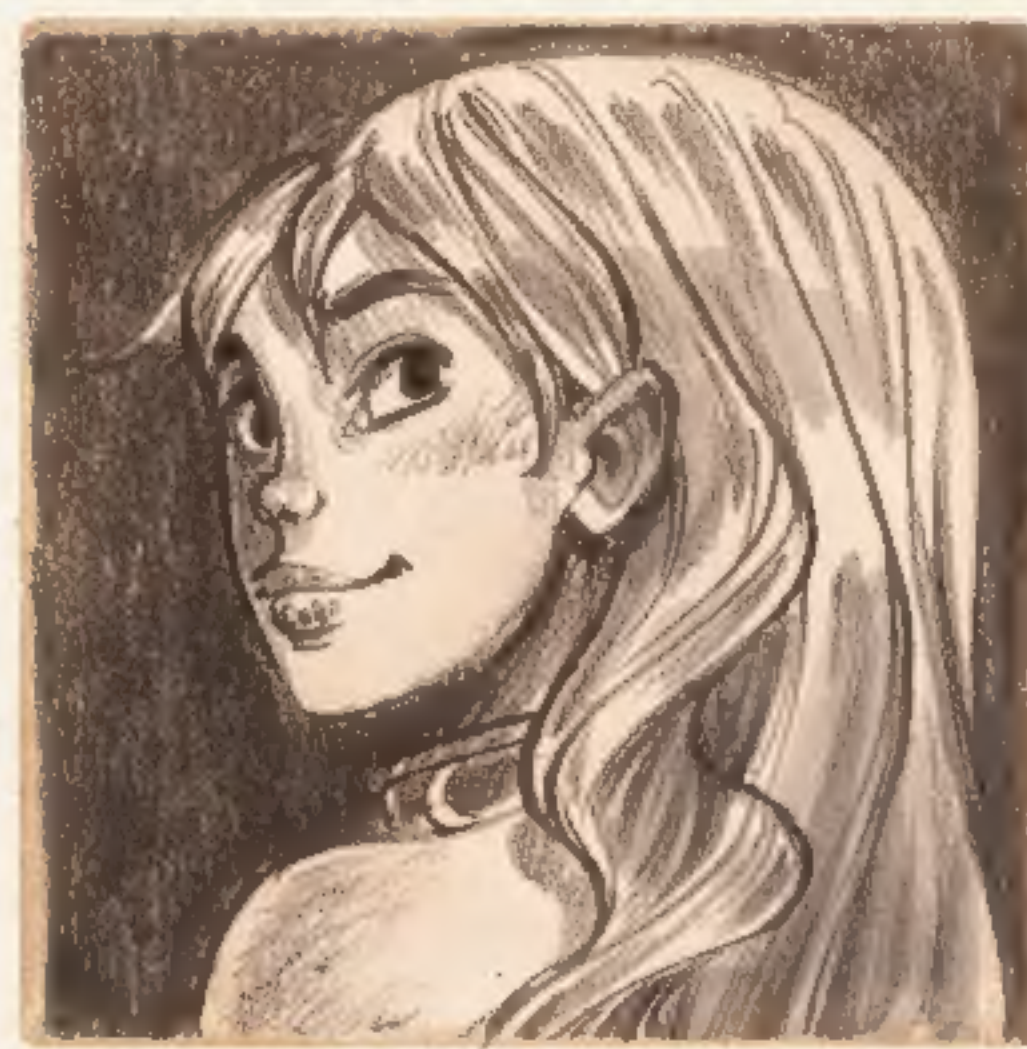
EKHO IS THE EARTH, EXCEPT IT'S NOT.



Here we find the same cities, the same countries, but everything's different - it's a world without electricity. One may be born here, or brought in from Earth by some funny little creatures, the Preshauns. Nobody knows exactly what the Preshauns want...



But Fourmille and Youri's arrival is going to upset the balance kept by the Preshauns. Possessed by ghosts, Fourmille must solve their problems in order to go back to being herself again... For when she changes hairstyle, it's a sign she is inhabited by another personality...



FOURMILLE GRATULE

was flying to New York when she tumbled on Ekho. An inheritance was waiting for her and she's now the head of a talent agency.



YURI PODROV

a computer guy, was Fourmille's seat-mate on the plane. He's been accidentally dragged to Ekho with her. Usually their personalities are hardly compatible.



GRACE LUMUMBA

she is a native to Ekho. Loyal secretary of the Gratule Agency. In her spare time she's Yumma the stripper.



SIGISBERT DE MOTAFIUME

this Preshaun is a young clerk. His mission is to make sure that the presence of Fourmille and Youri doesn't affect the delicate balance of the mirror world too much!



THE PRESHAUNS

are strange and well mannered little creatures who ensure the proper functioning of Ekho; by using strange machines, they keep what they call the Thaumic equilibrium. They have to drink tea at specific times of the day, otherwise they might turn into dreadful, out of control, monsters!





WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, I MUST ASK YOU TO GET OFF THE SNAILBUS.



OH MY...!



HEBYME!
HEBYME!



A FRESHAIN IS ABOUT TO TURN!

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

OUT IN PUBLIC!



IT'S ALL RIGHT, SIR RELAX,
NOBODY'S GOING TO BOTHER
YOU...

I...
I...



EMERGENCY
TEA VIAL!

BUT... WHAT IF
I NEEDED IT?
FOR MYSELF?

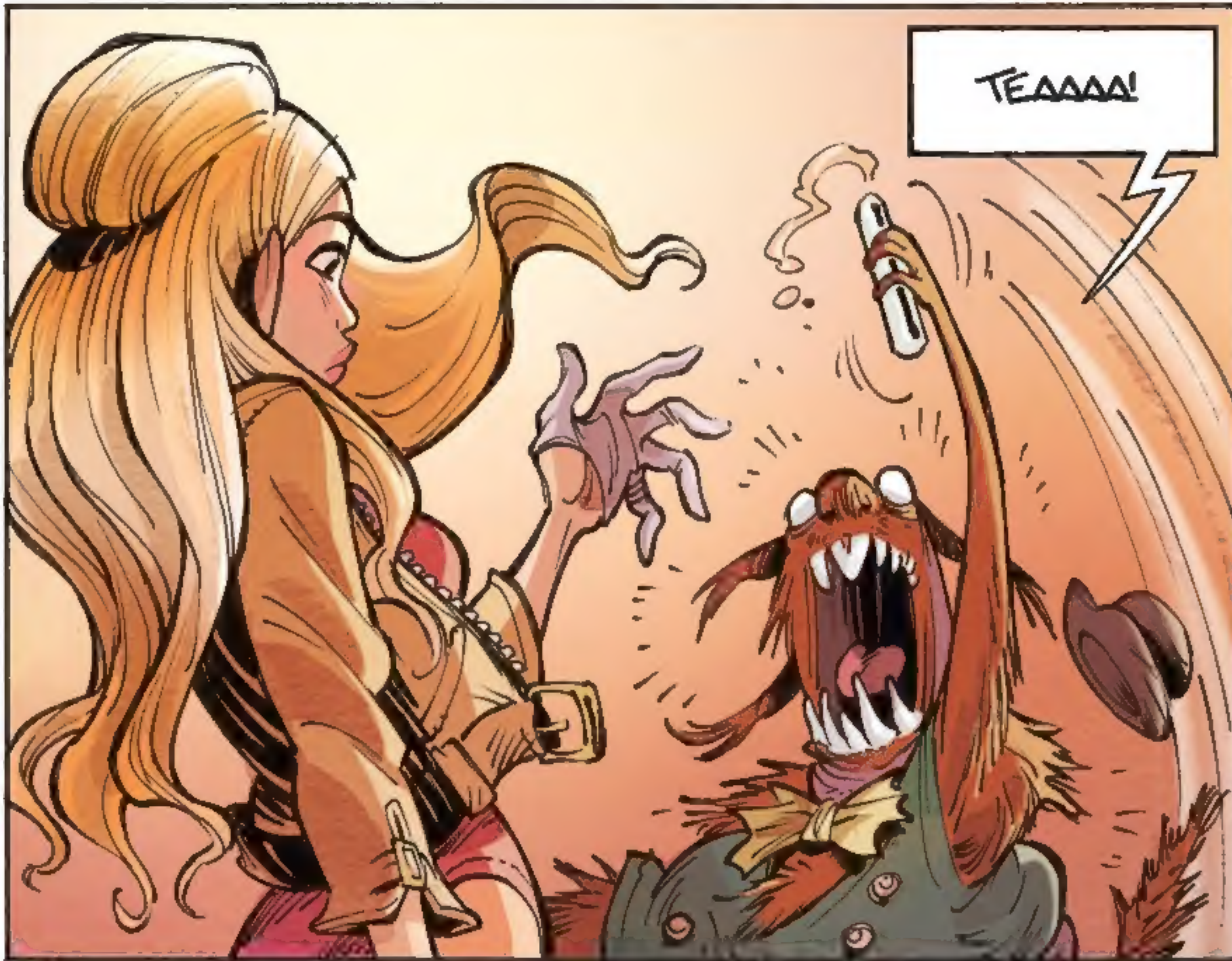


THIS IS AN
EMERGENCY,
SIGSBERT!

OK...
OK



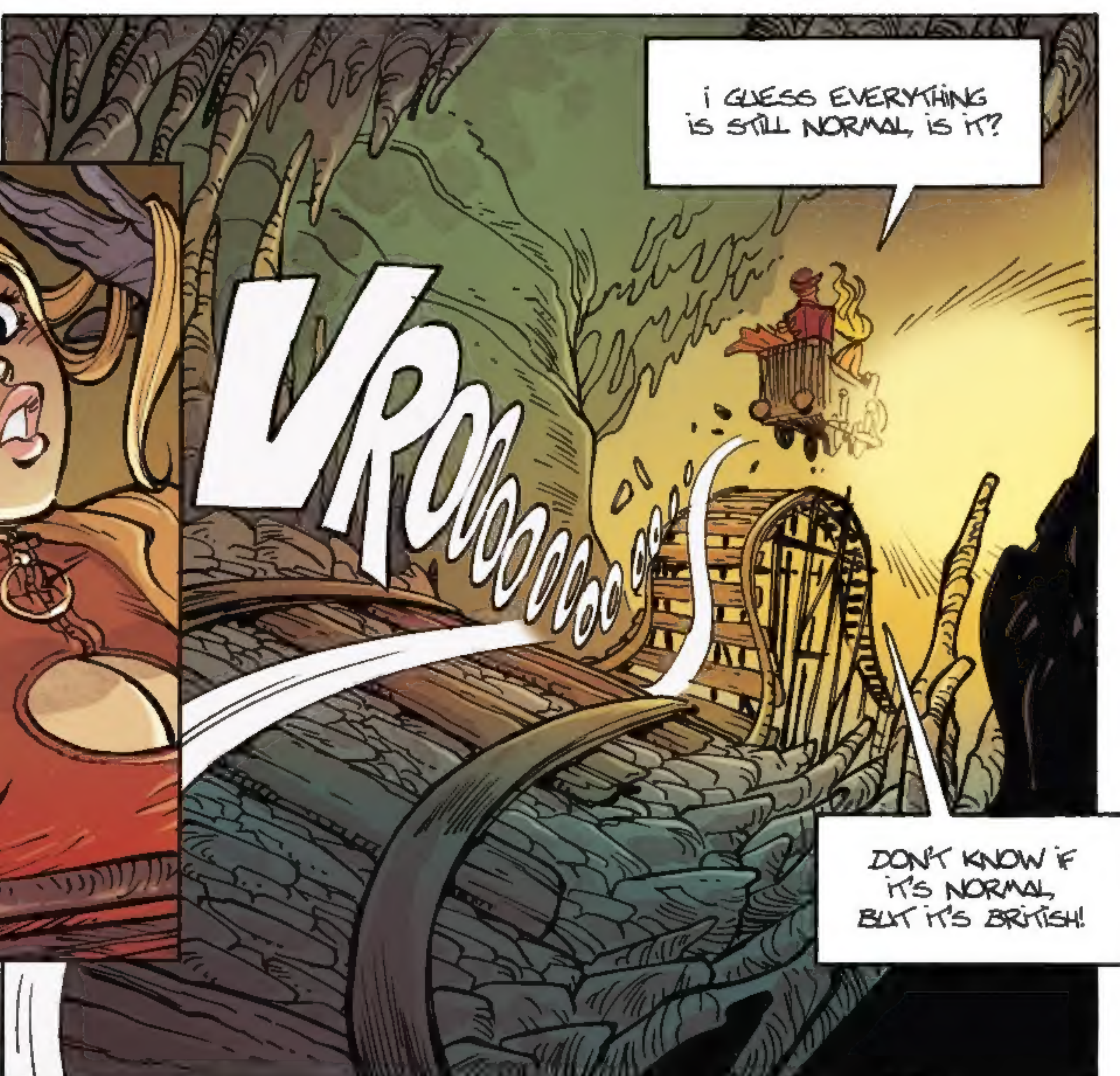
TIK

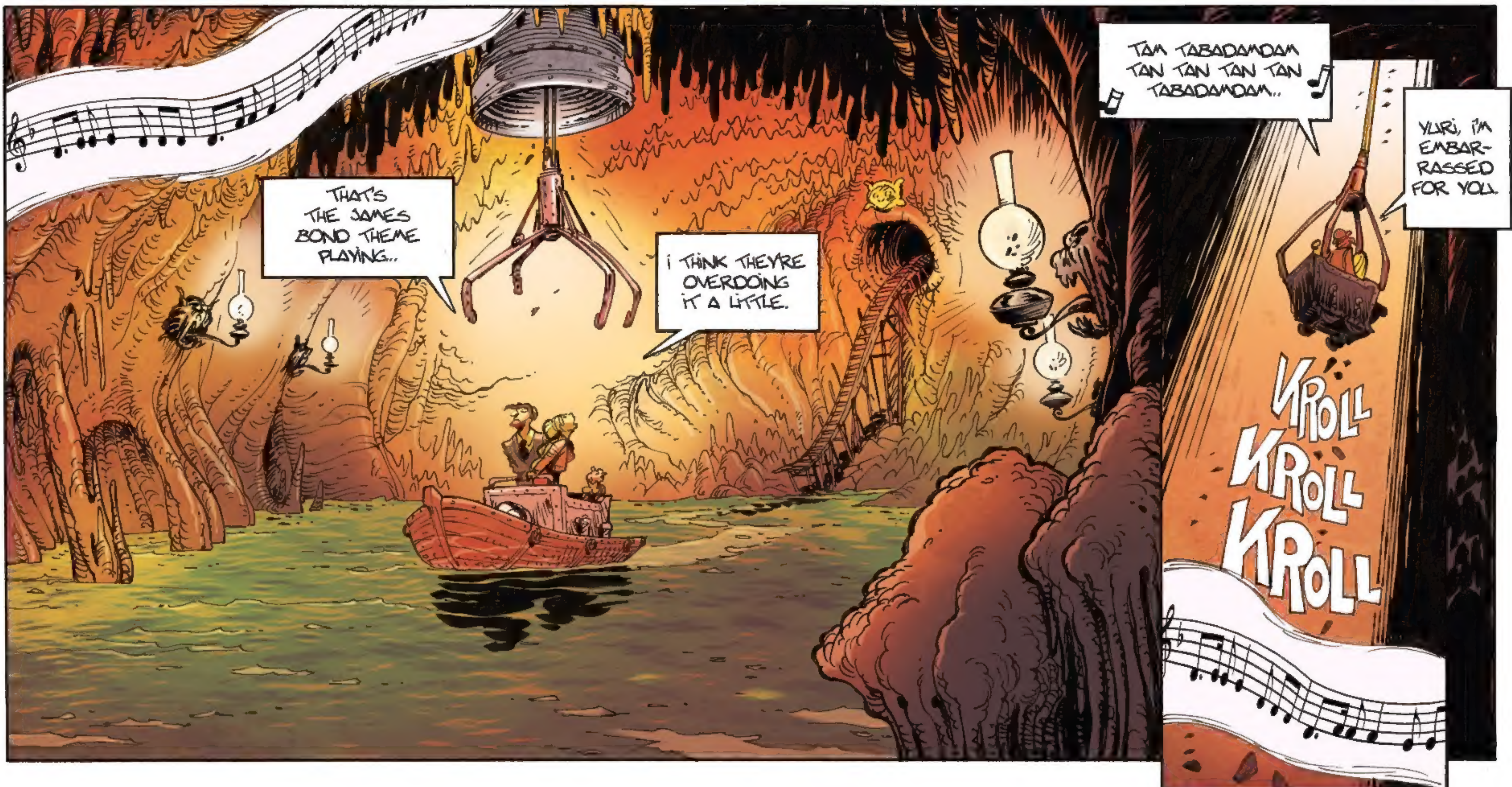
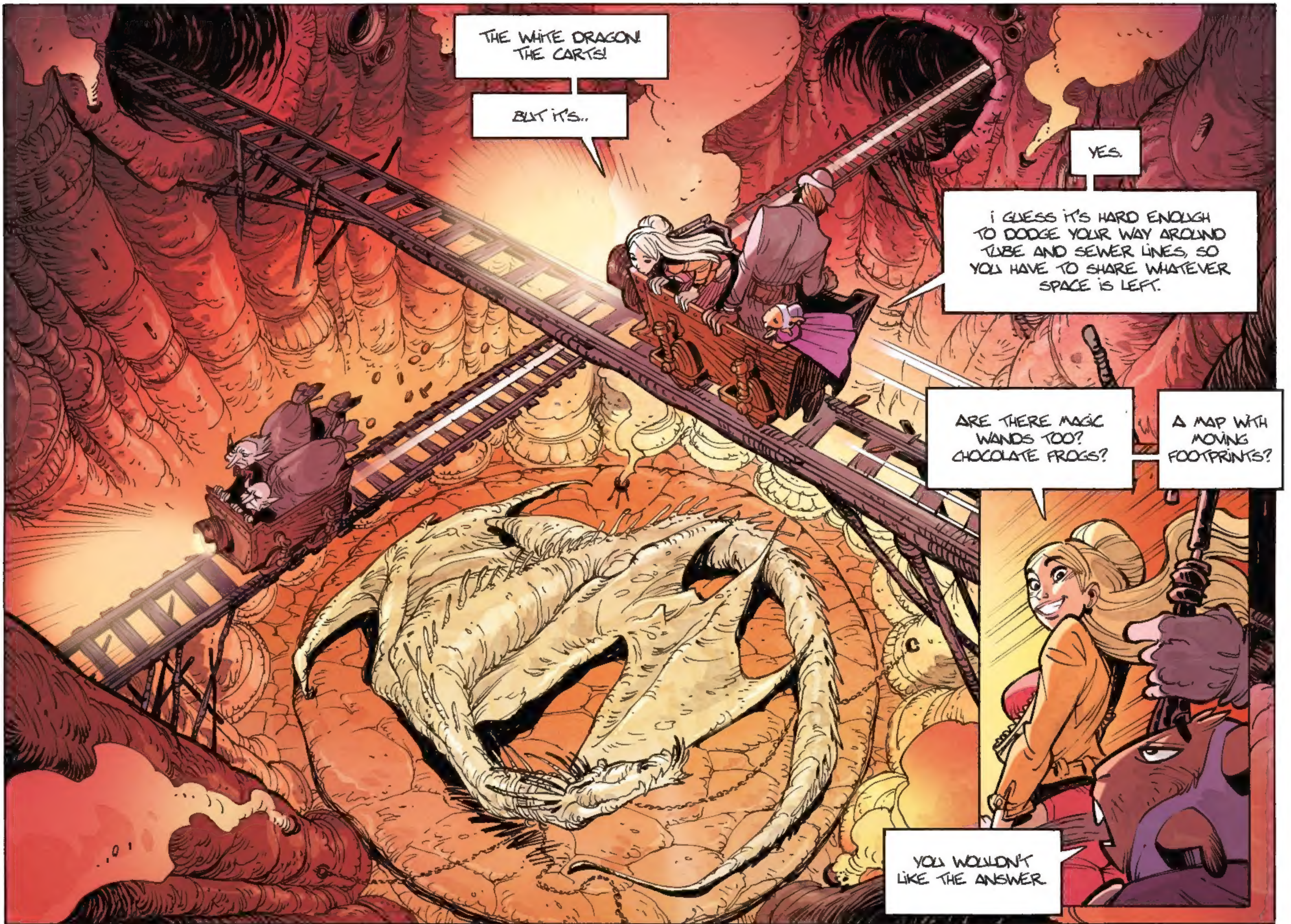


TEAAAA!











IT SEEMS WE'VE ARRIVED.



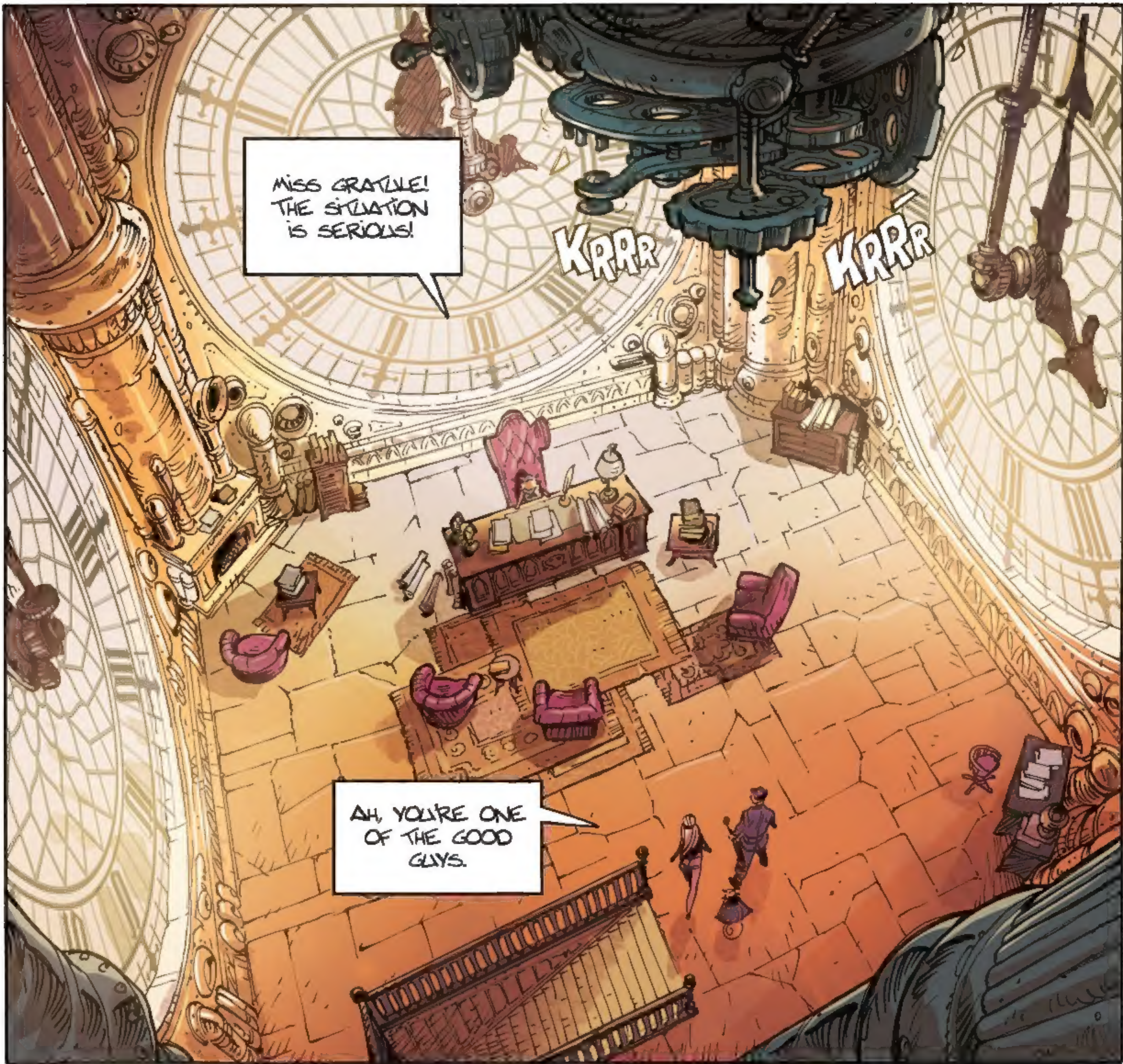
AND THIS LADY IS...



MISS MINIPONY, OF COURSE.



COME IN, HUM IS EXPECTING YOU.



MISS GRAYLE! THE SITUATION IS SERIOUS!

AH, YOU'RE ONE OF THE GOOD GUYS.



ERM... WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT?

THE BAD GUY IS ALWAYS SITTING IN AN ARMCHAIR WITH HIS BACK TO US. HE STARTS TALKING AND THEN TURNS.

YOU SIT FACING US, THEREFORE YOU ARE A GOOD GUY.

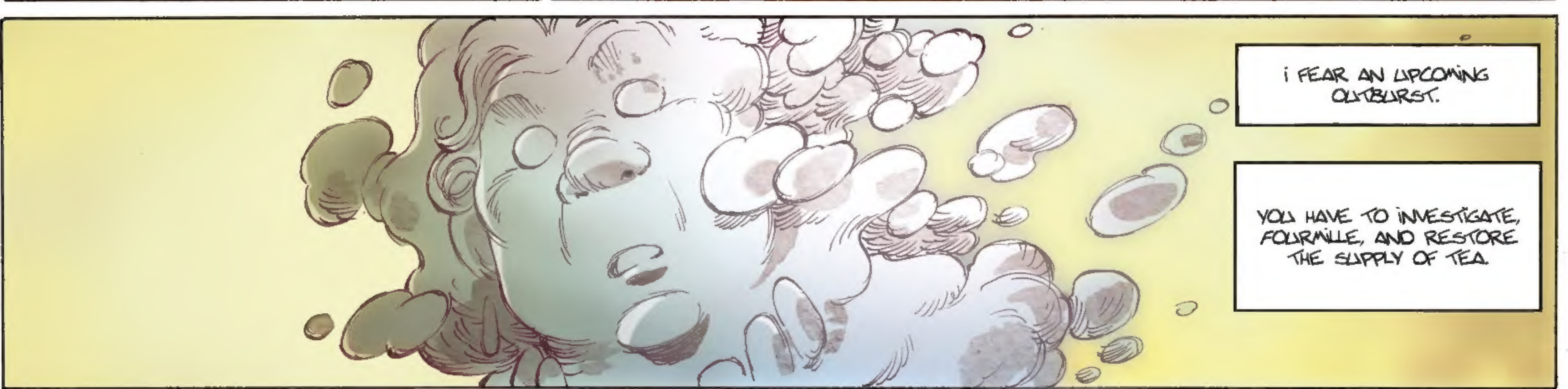
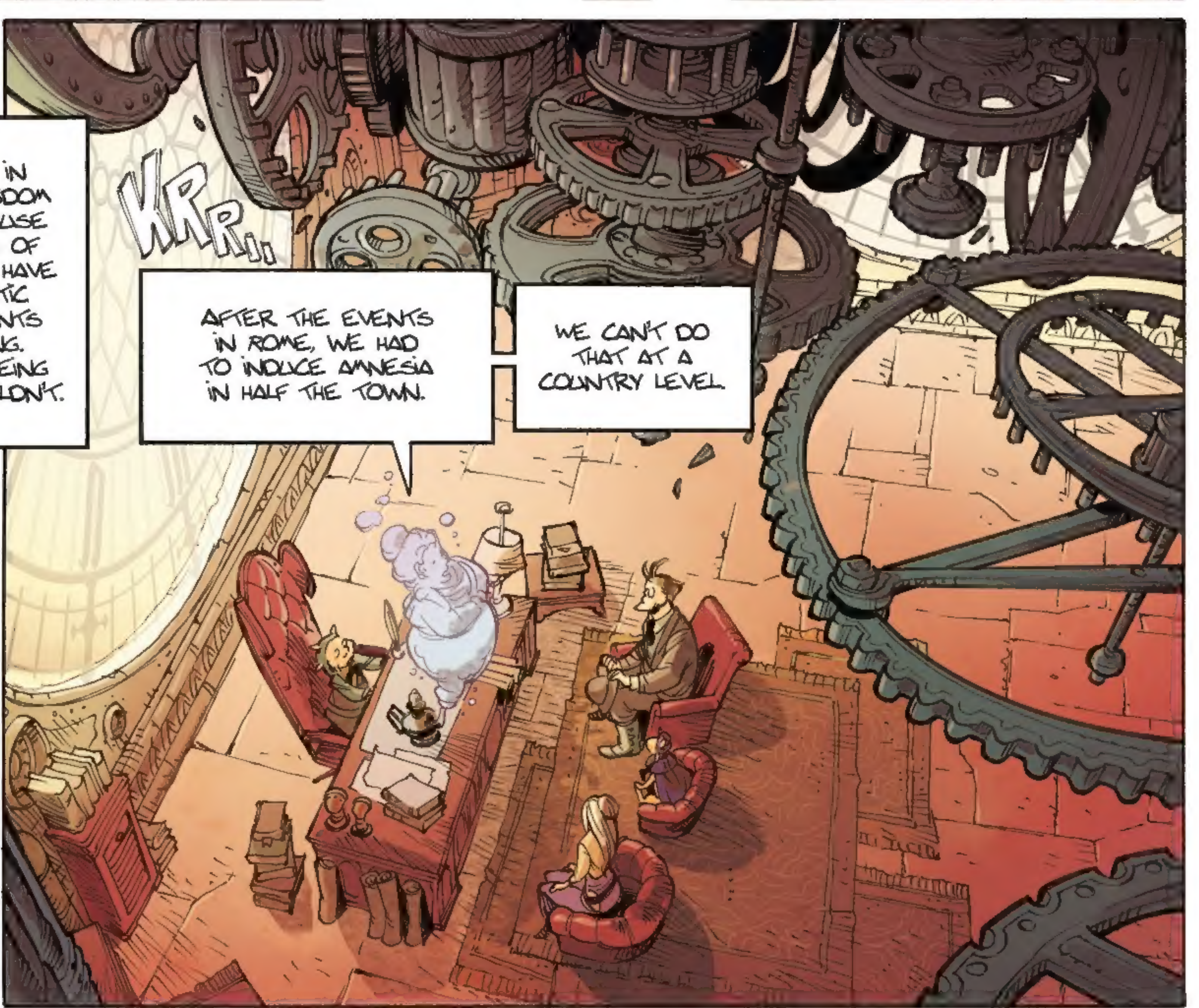
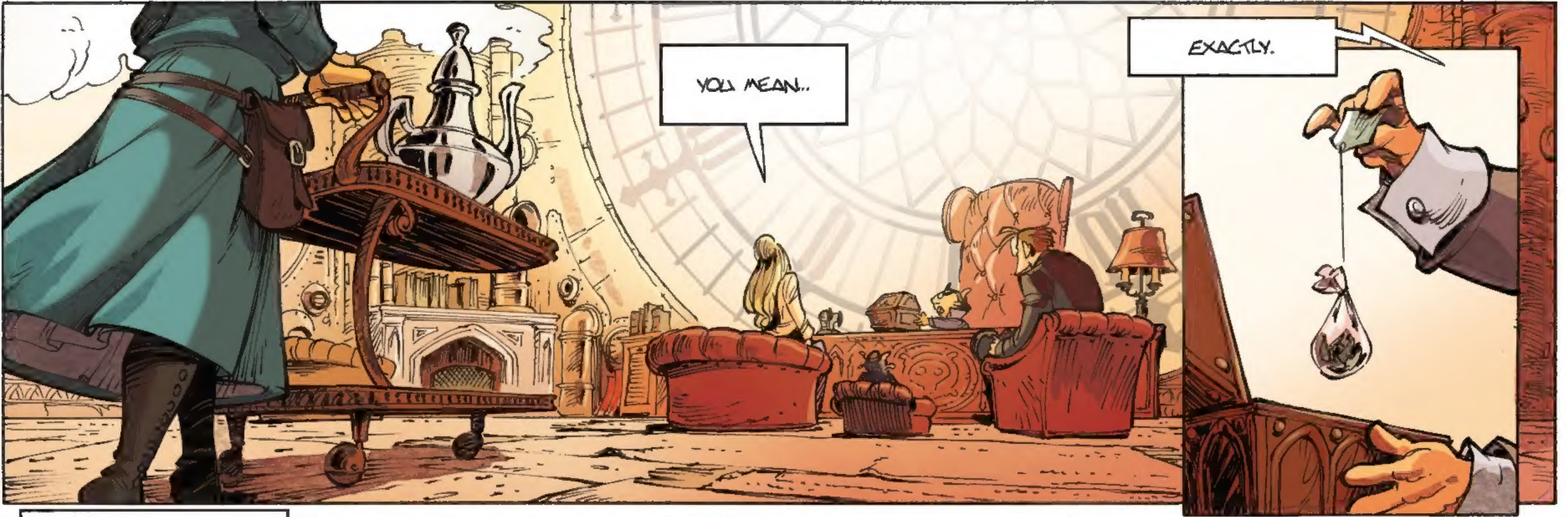
EASY.

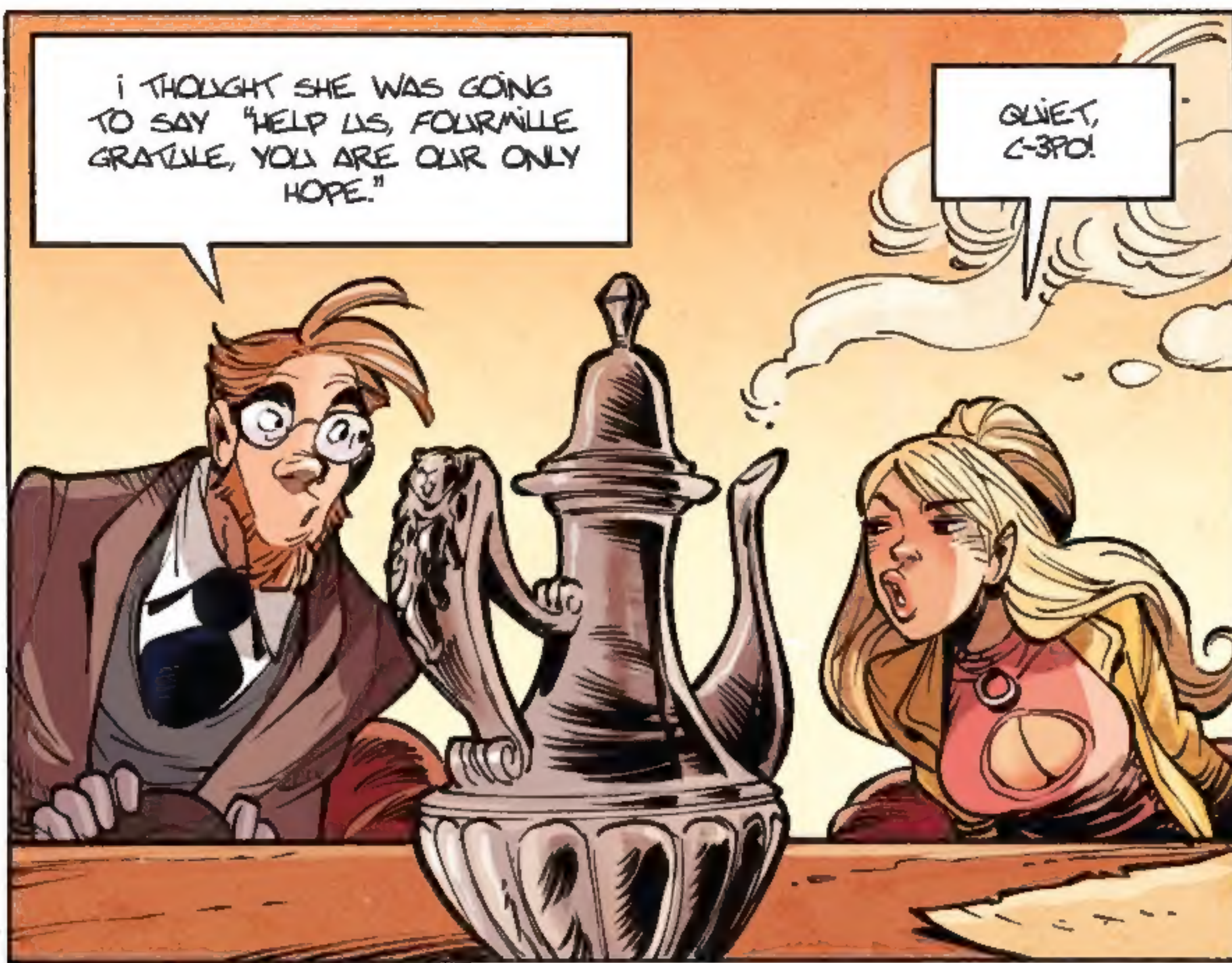


LET ME INTRODUCE MYSELF, I'M HUM.

HUM?

HUM... I ASKED YOU TO COME HERE ON THE REQUEST OF THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY.





I THOUGHT SHE WAS GOING TO SAY "HELP US, FOURMILLE GRATULE, YOU ARE OUR ONLY HOPE."

QUIET, C-3PO!



REALLY? THERE'S NO TEA LEFT? OHHHH...



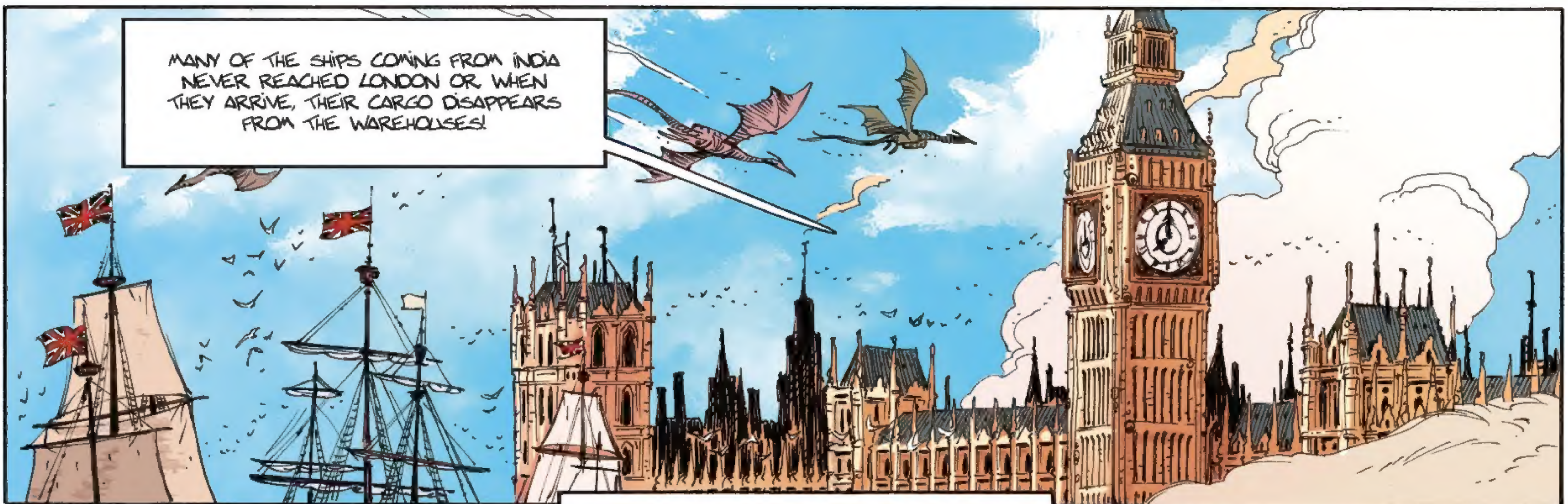
THIS EXPLAINS WHAT WE SAW AT FICCADILLY!



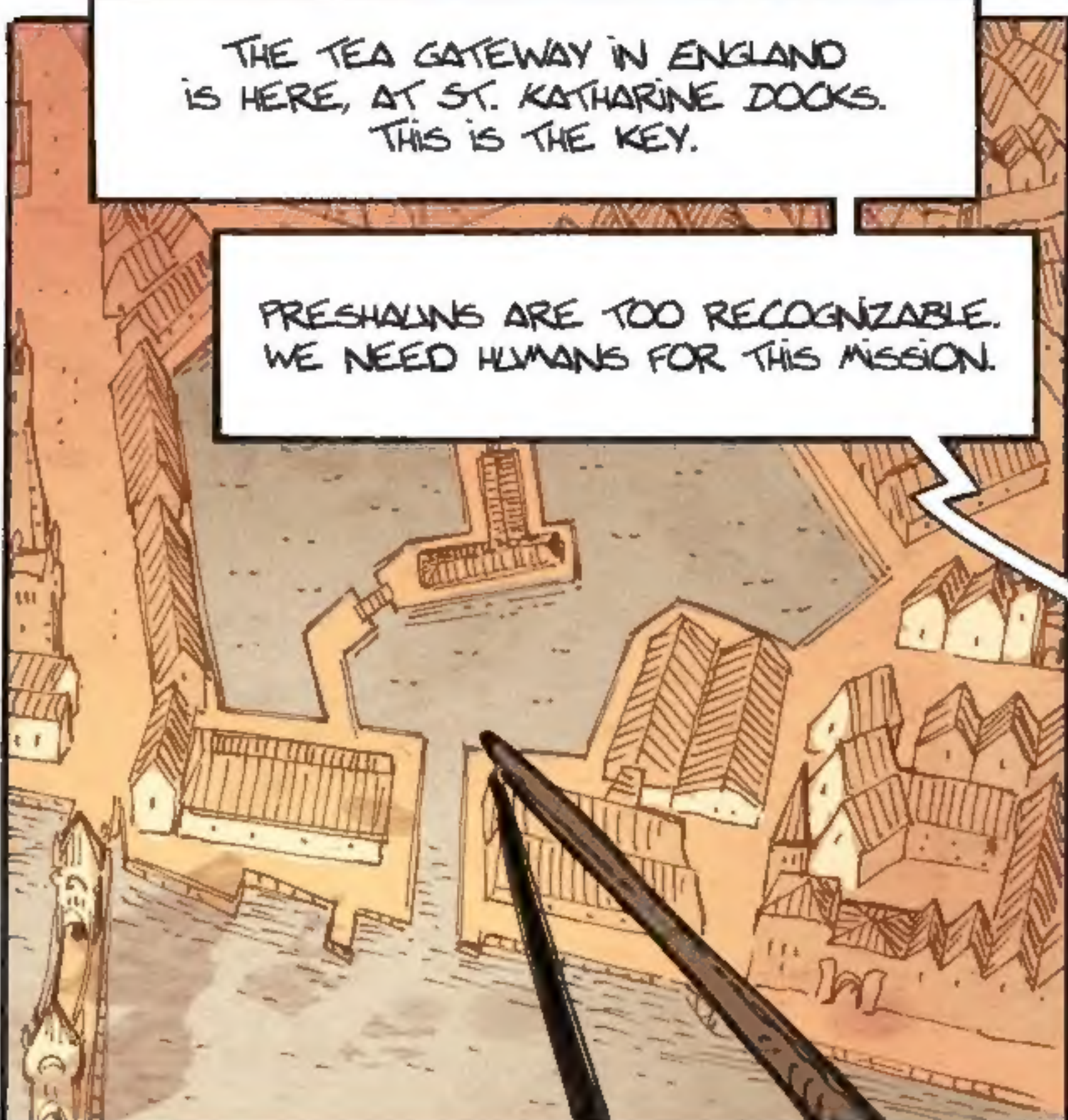
THE STOCKS HAVE RUN OUT AND THE STORES ARE EMPTY. FAMILIES TREASURE THEIR LAST BOXES AND USE THE SAME TEA BAG OVER AND OVER...

WHAT DO THE SUPPLIERS SAY?

ONE OR TWO INDEPENDENT SUPPLIERS ARE STILL DELIVERING, BUT IT'S FAR FROM ADEQUATE. THE PROBLEM IS THE ASIAN TEA COMPANY THAT HAS A NEAR-MONOPOLY OF THE MARKET.



MANY OF THE SHIPS COMING FROM INDIA NEVER REACHED LONDON OR WHEN THEY ARRIVE, THEIR CARGO DISAPPEARS FROM THE WAREHOUSES!



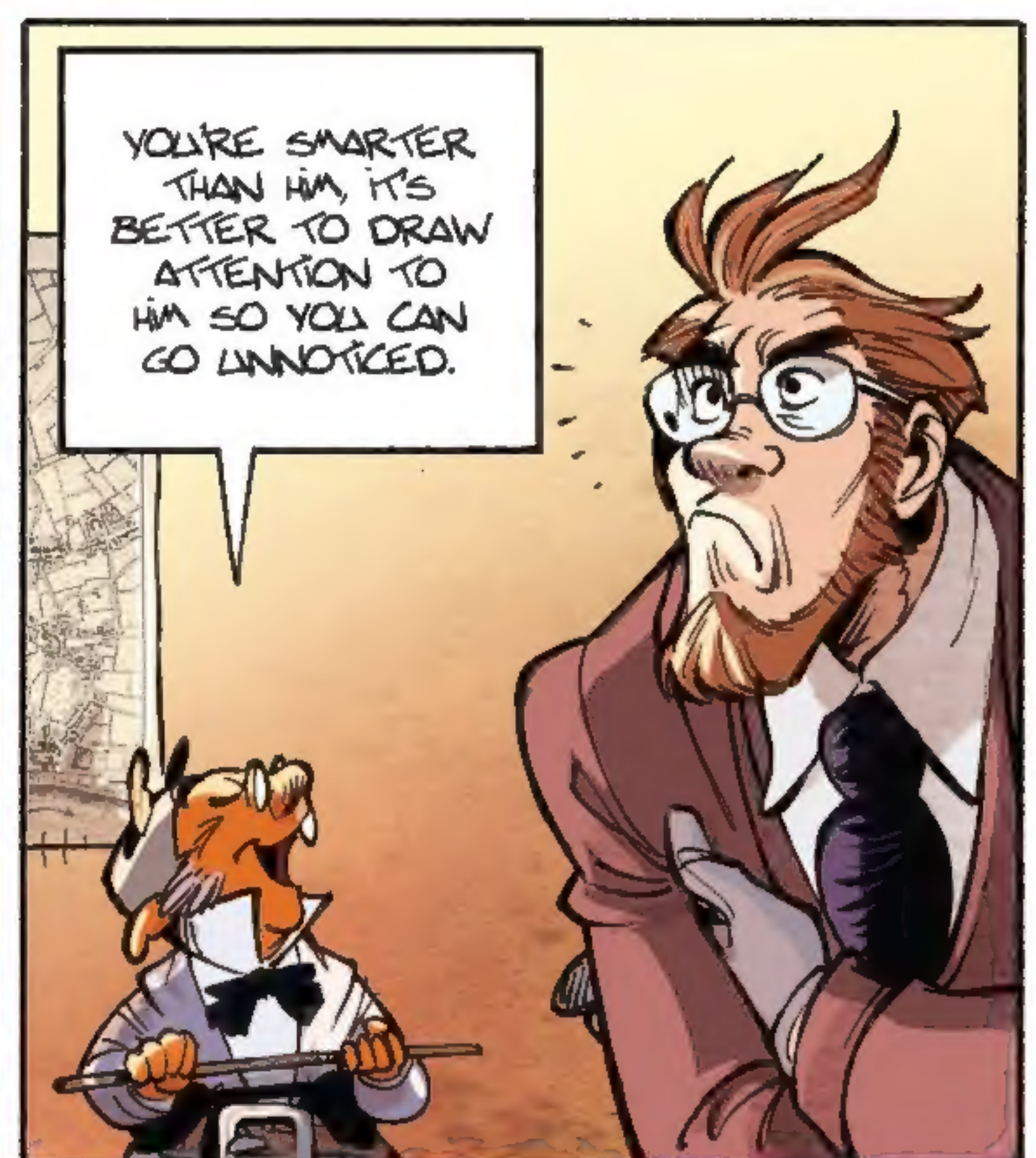
THE TEA GATEWAY IN ENGLAND IS HERE, AT ST. KATHARINE DOCKS. THIS IS THE KEY.

FRESHAINS ARE TOO RECOGNIZABLE. WE NEED HUMANS FOR THIS MISSION.

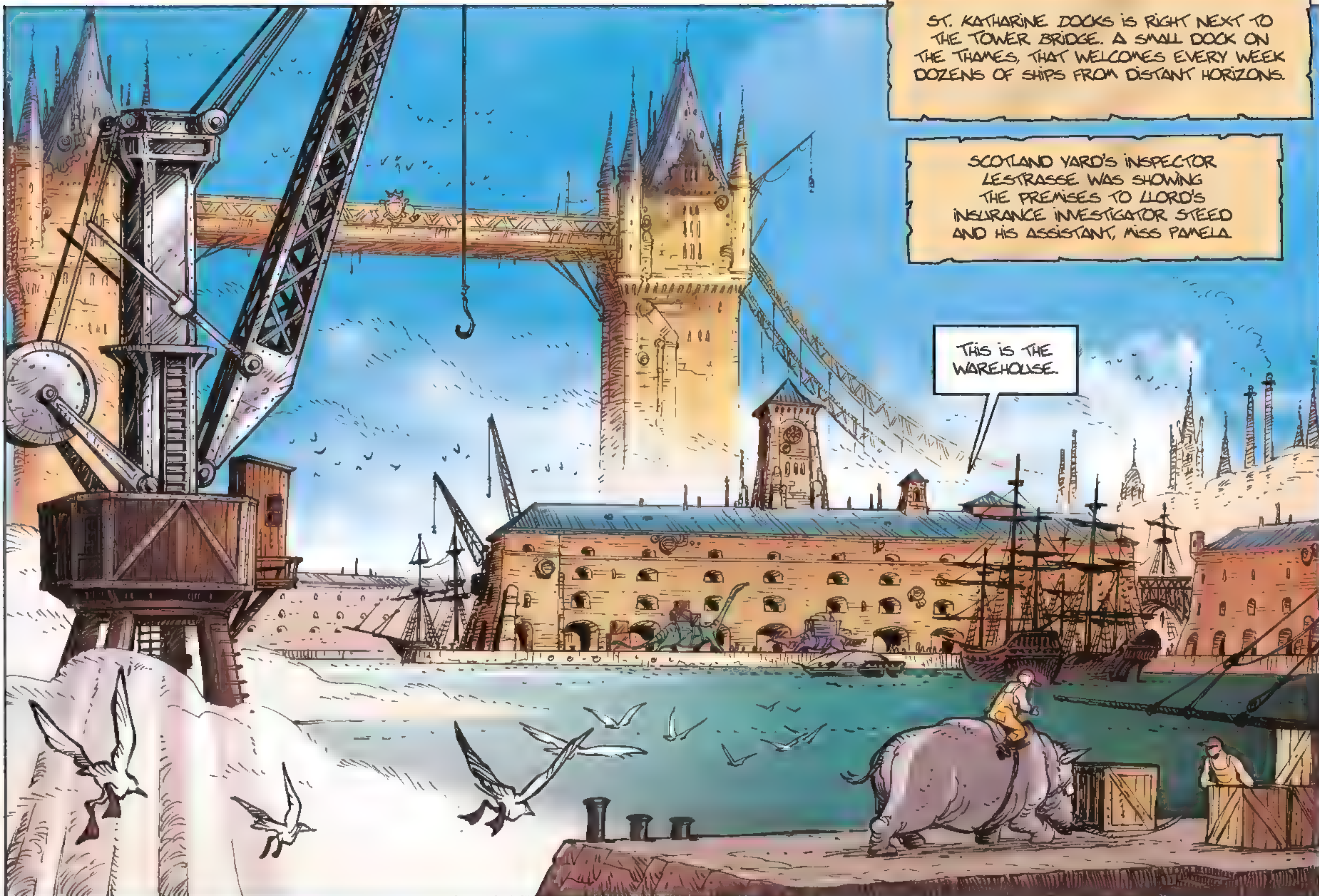


MISTER PODROV WILL PRETEND TO BE AN INSURANCE INVESTIGATOR AND YOU MISS GRATULE, HIS SECRETARY.

WHAT? THIS IS SEXISM! WHY NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND?



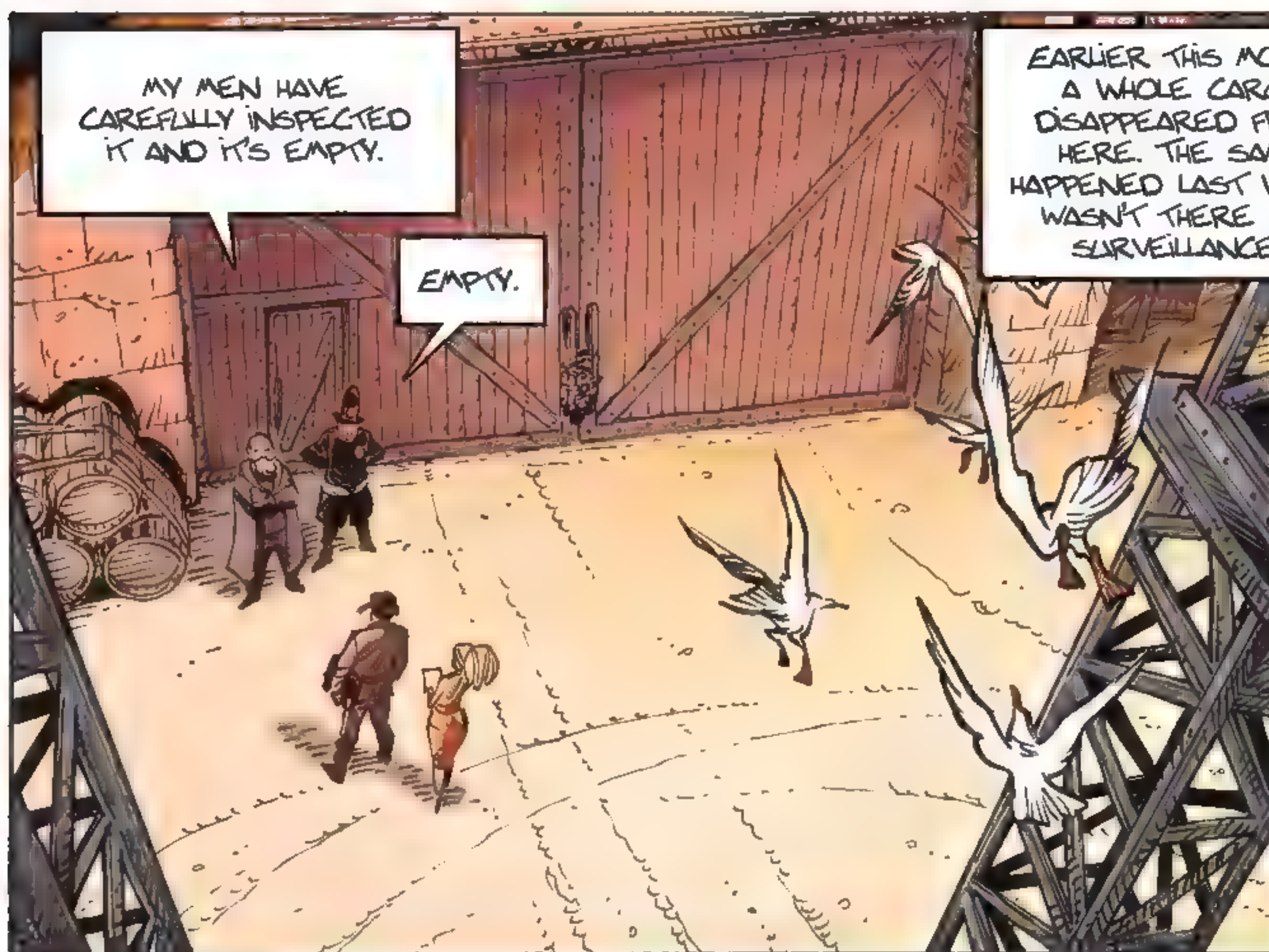
YOU'RE SMARTER THAN HIM, IT'S BETTER TO DRAW ATTENTION TO HIM SO YOU CAN GO UNNOTICED.



ST. KATHARINE DOCKS IS RIGHT NEXT TO THE TOWER BRIDGE. A SMALL DOCK ON THE THAMES, THAT WELCOMES EVERY WEEK DOZENS OF SHIPS FROM DISTANT HORIZONS.

SCOTLAND YARD'S INSPECTOR LESTRASSE WAS SHOWING THE PREMISES TO LORD'S INSURANCE INVESTIGATOR STEED AND HIS ASSISTANT, MISS PAMELA

THIS IS THE WAREHOUSE.



MY MEN HAVE CAREFULLY INSPECTED IT AND IT'S EMPTY.

EMPTY.

EARLIER THIS MONTH A WHOLE CARGO DISAPPEARED FROM HERE. THE SAME HAPPENED LAST WEEK. WASN'T THERE ANY SURVEILLANCE?

THE FIRST TIME, THE DOCK GUARD DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING.

THE SECOND TIME, OUR SERVICE HAS BEEN ON THE WATCH CONSTANTLY.

CONSTANTLY.



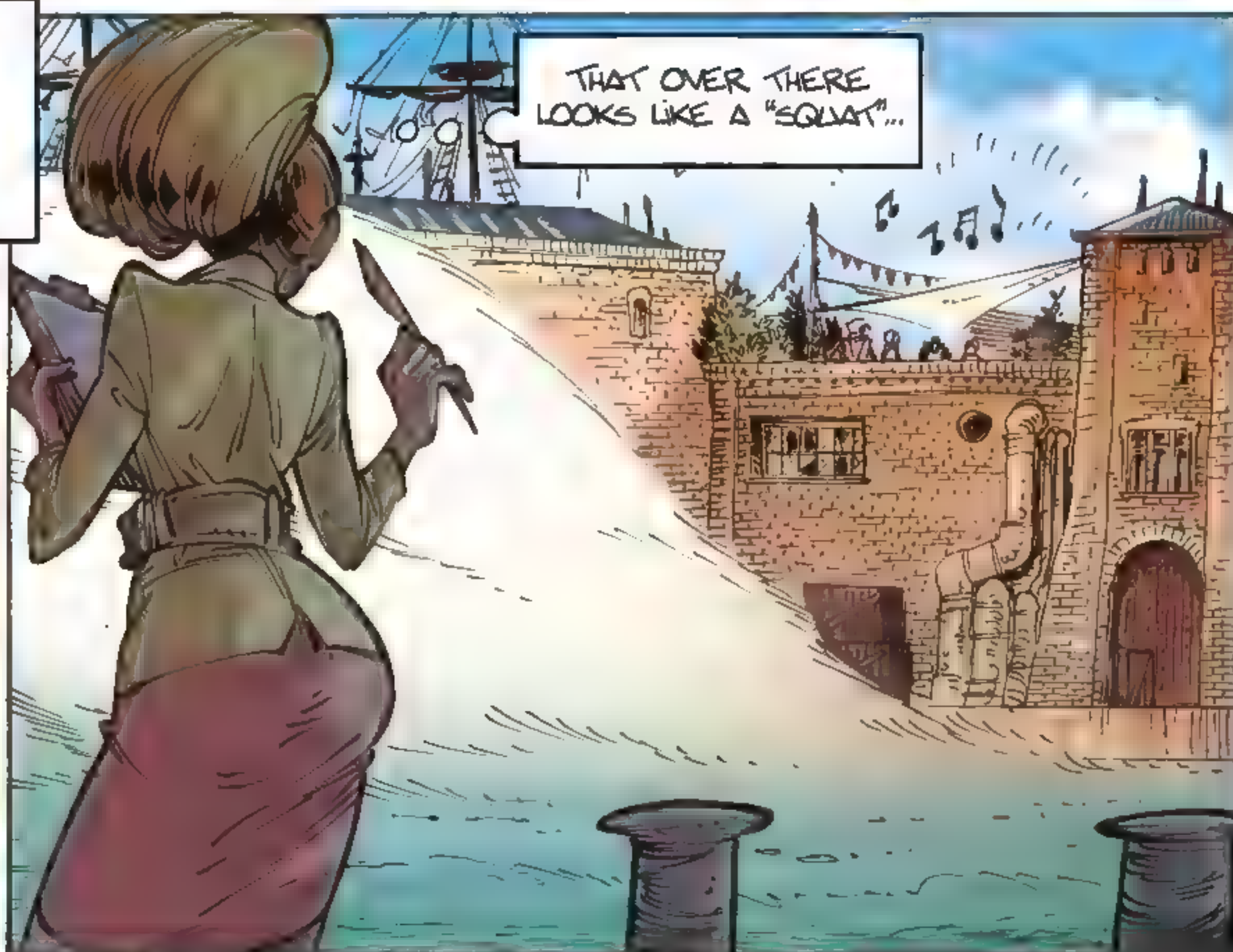
?

MEANING?



I PERSONALLY STOOD ALL NIGHT IN FRONT OF THIS DOOR, SIR

CLAC

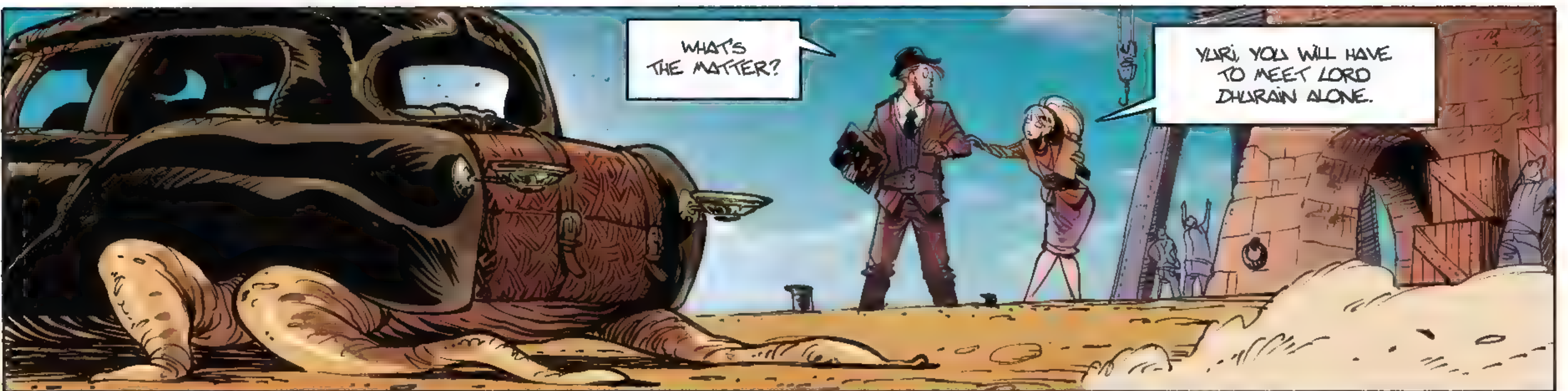
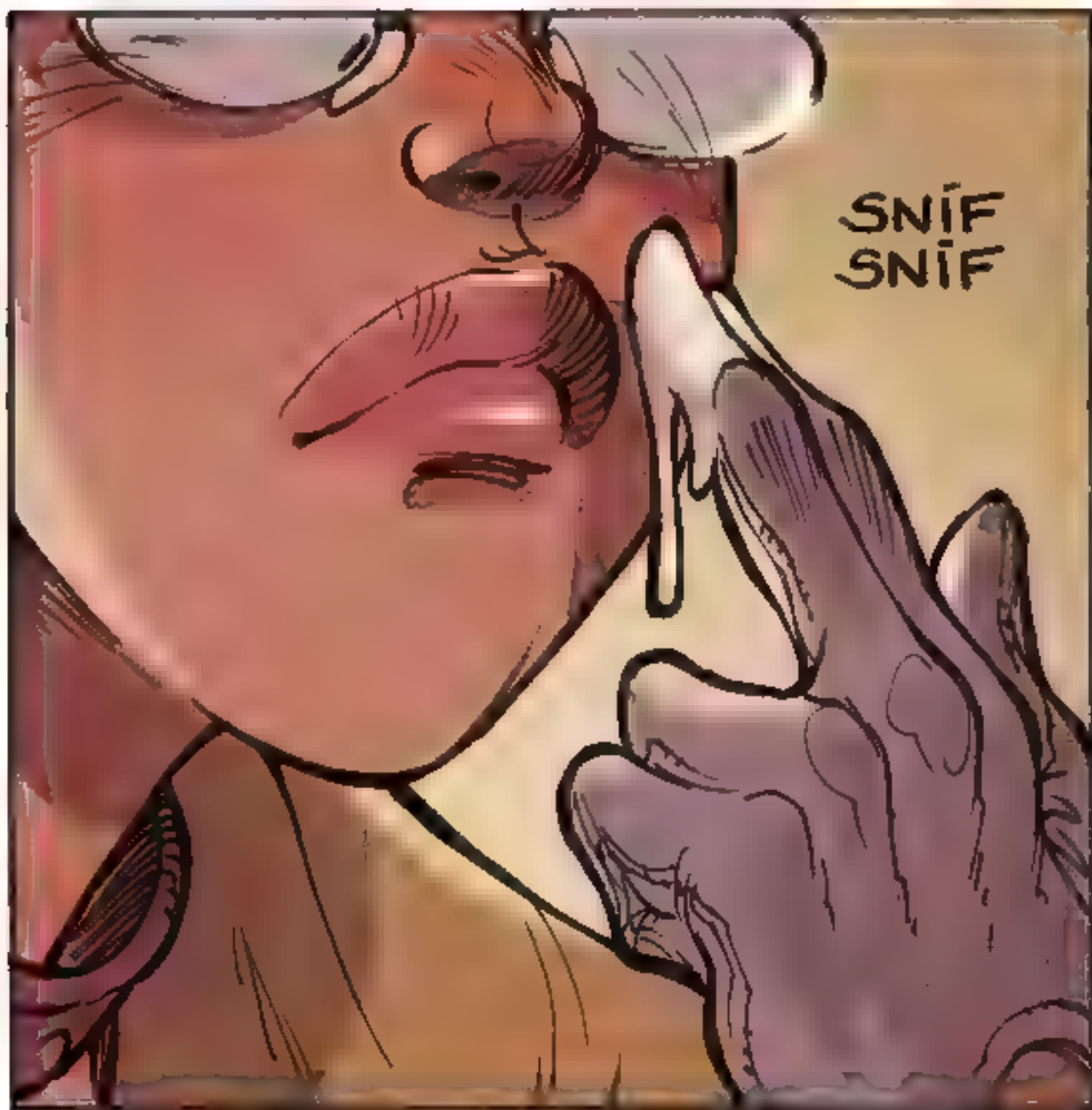
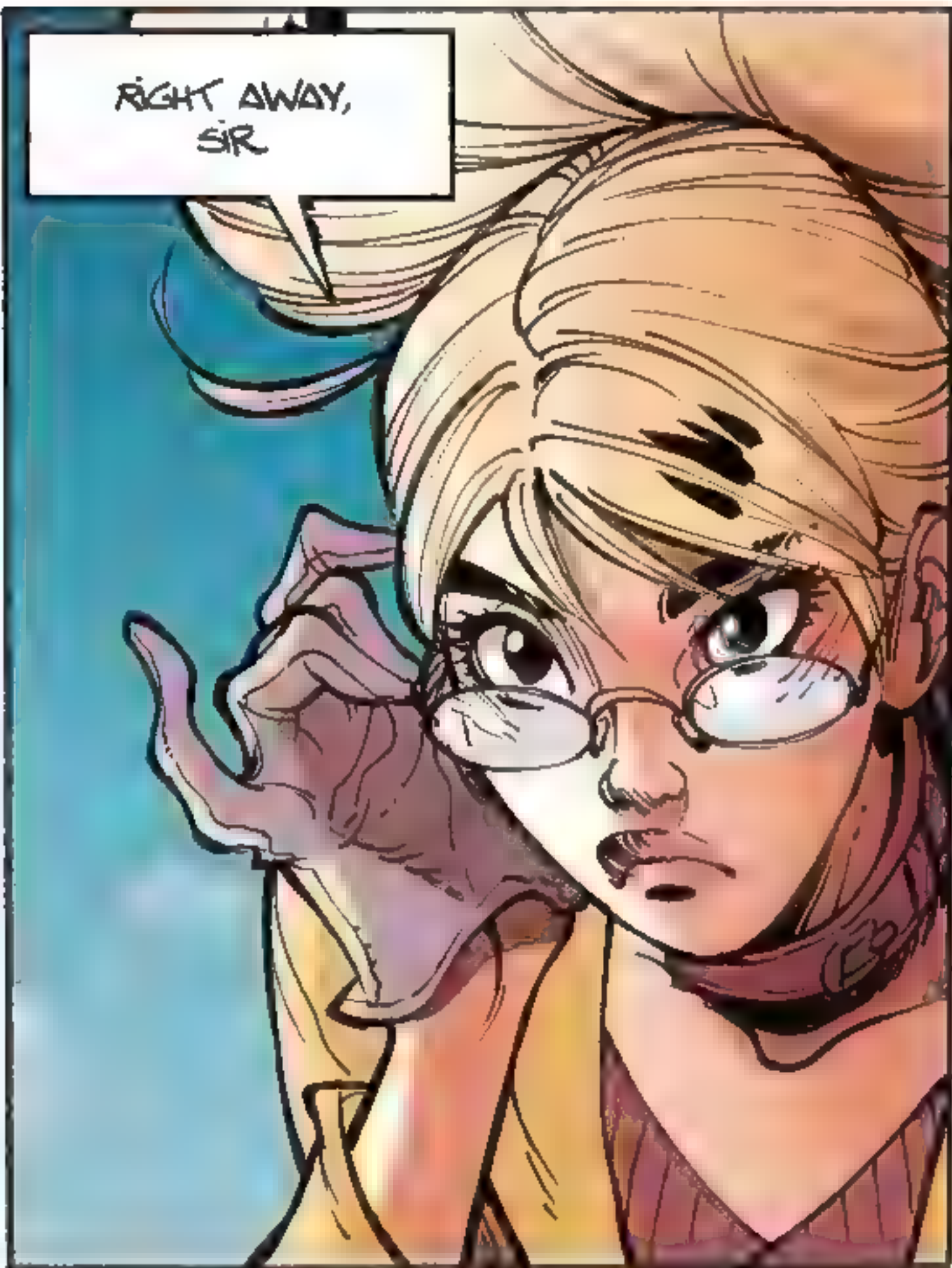


THAT OVER THERE LOOKS LIKE A "SQUAT"...



WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE A LOOK INSIDE?

OF COURSE! ARE YOU COMING FOURM... MISS PAMELA?

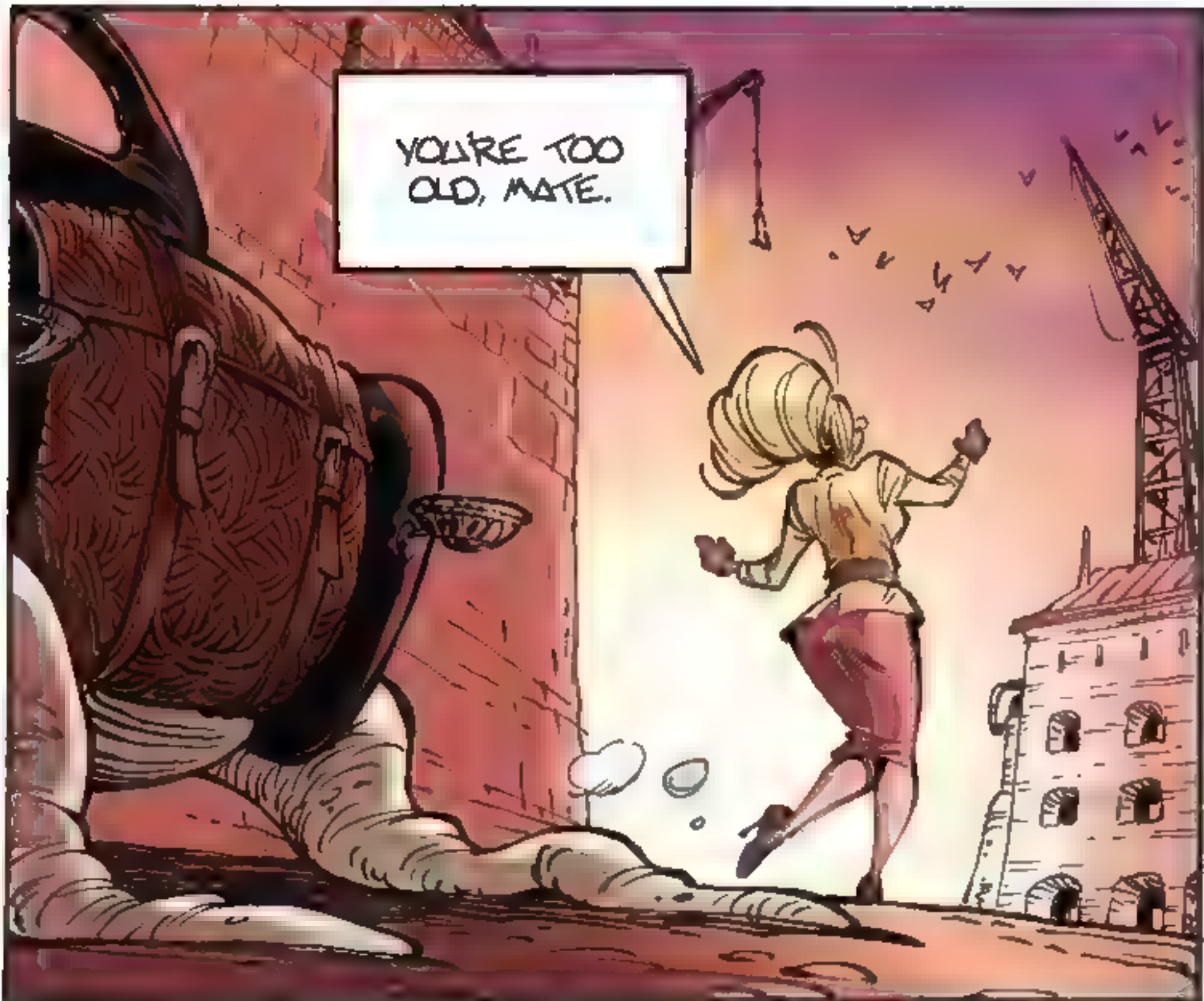


I'VE SPOTTED A SQUAT ON TOP OF THE WAREHOUSE ACROSS THE STREET. A PERFECT OBSERVATION POST.

THE SQUATTERS ARE GOING OUT. I'M GOING TO INFILTRATE THEM.



AM? AND NOT ME?



YOU'RE TOO OLD, MATE.



I CAN'T WALK ANY FASTER WITH THIS SKIRT AND THESE HEELS!



TIC TIC TIC



KRUINK



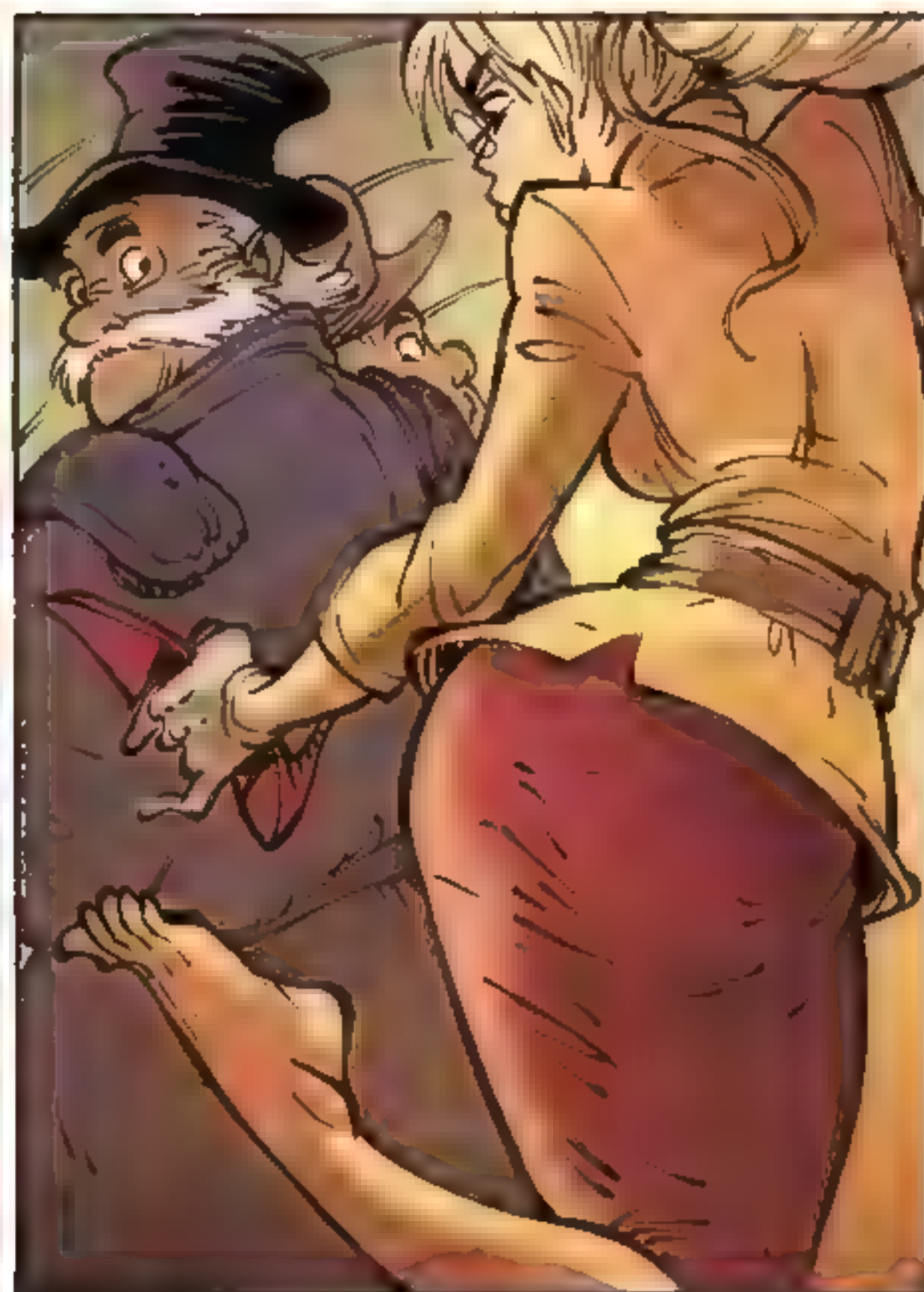
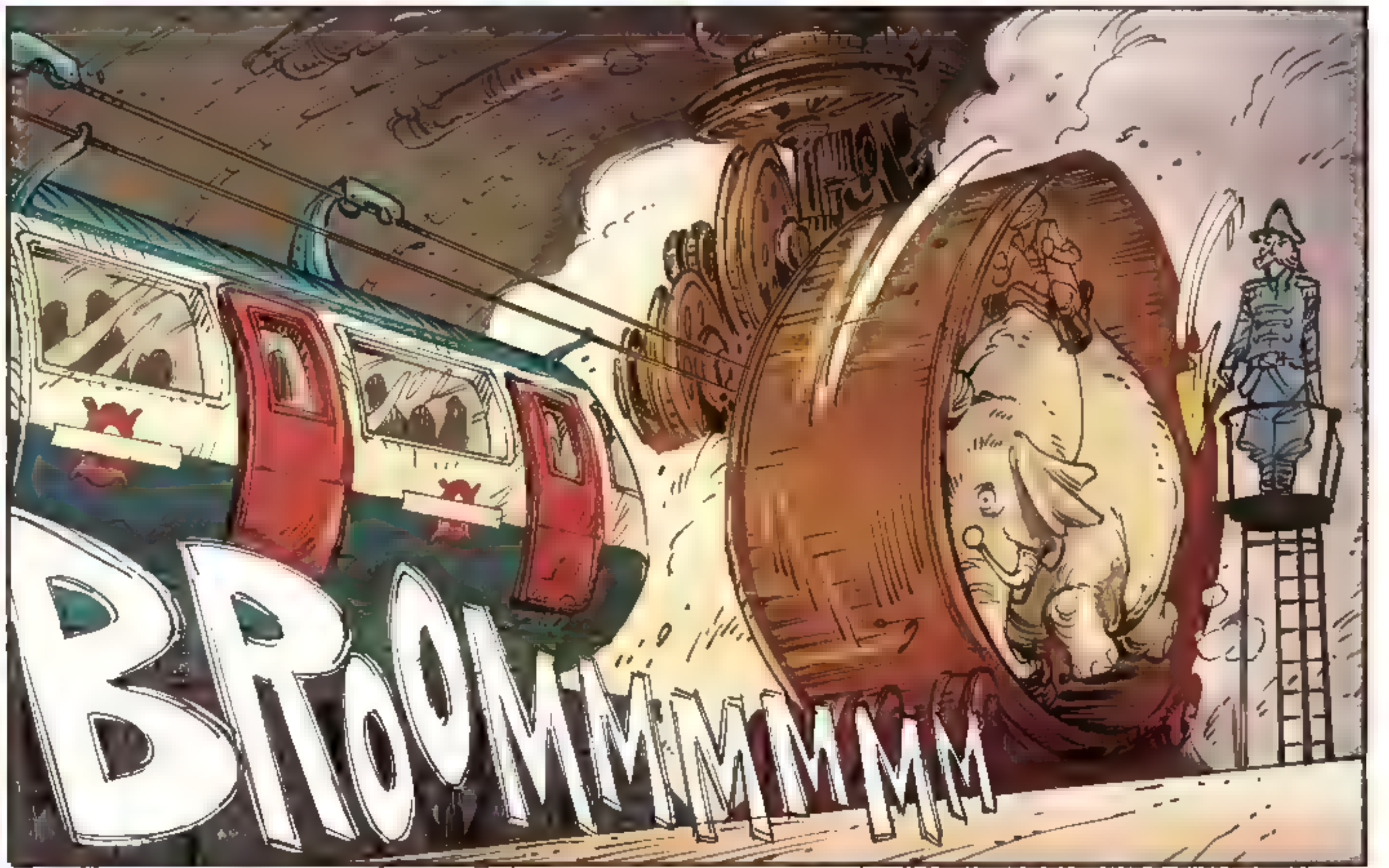
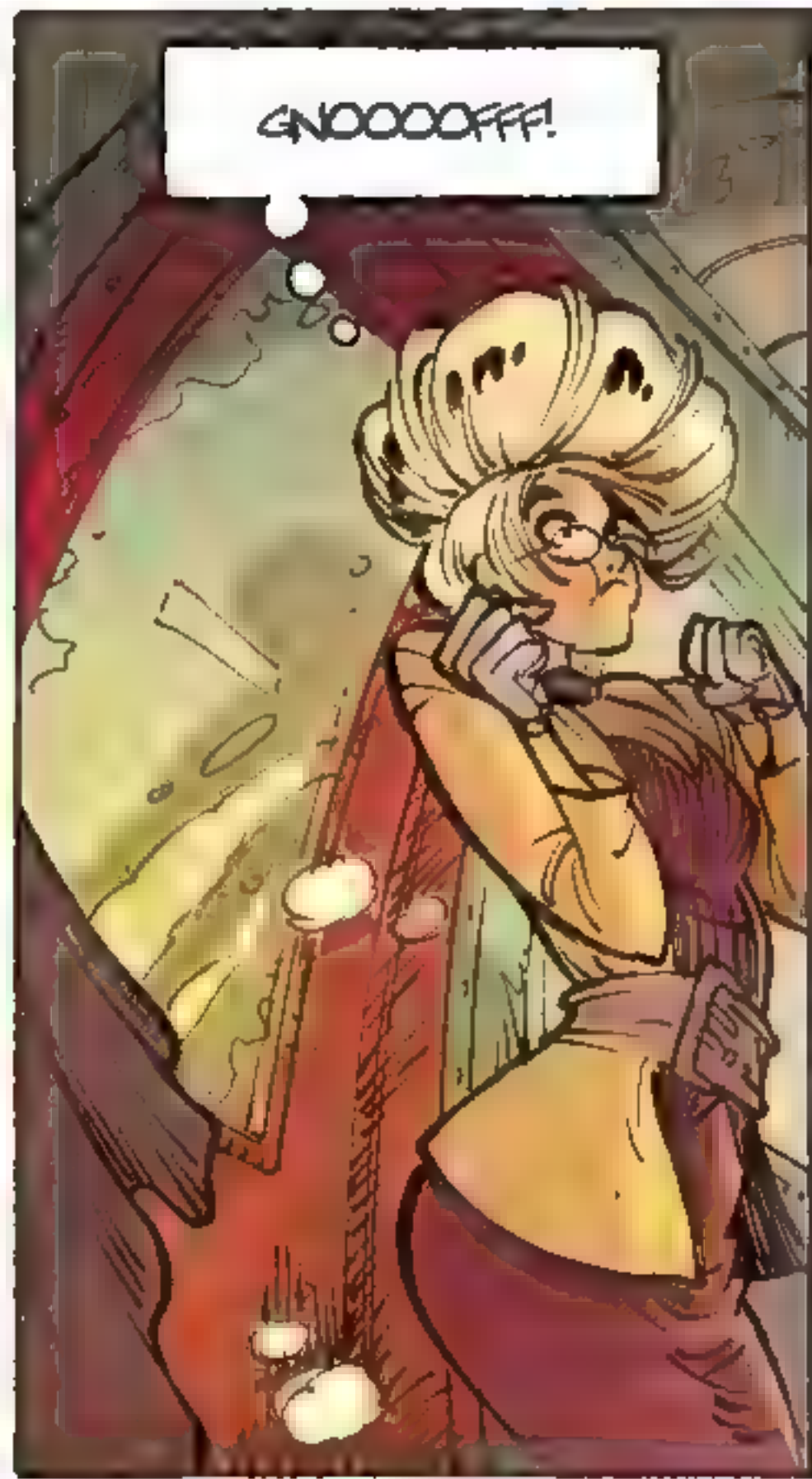
FLUX THIS SHIT!



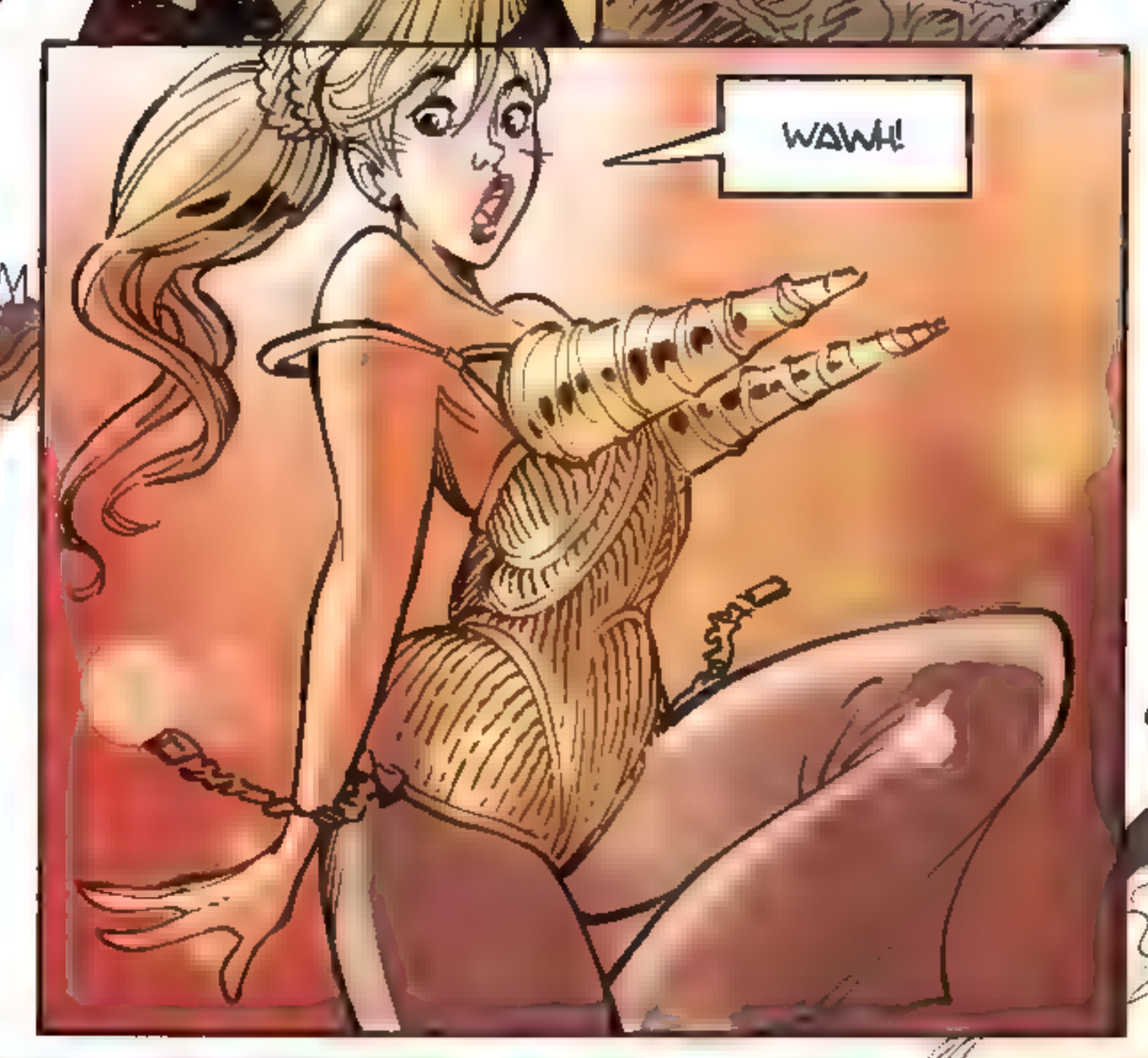
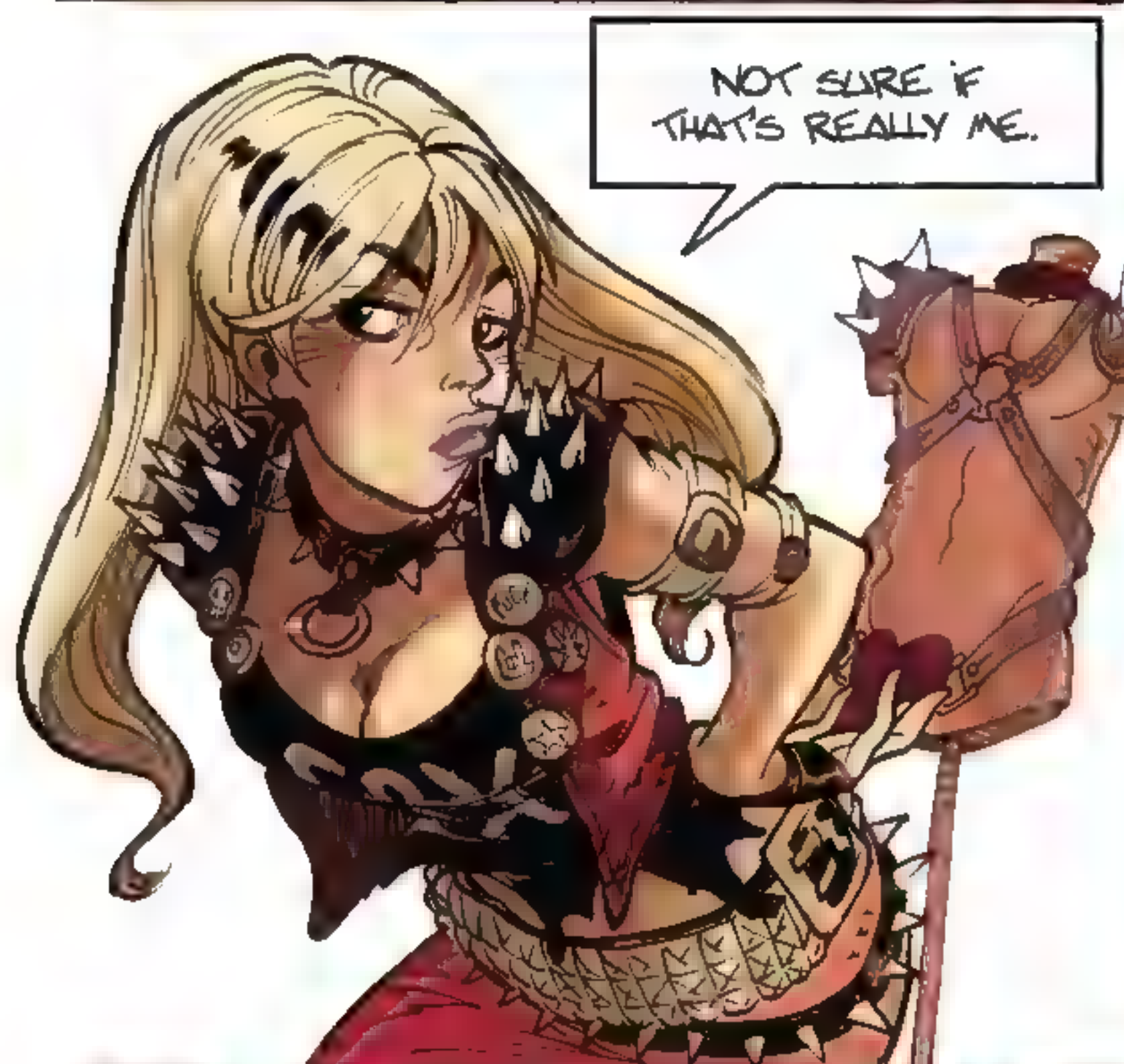
TIC TIC TCHONK TCHONK

I CAN'T LOOSE THEM...









ENGLISH FASHION IS NICE, BUT BY
THE TIME YOU FINISH YOUR SHOPPING,
YOU FEEL LIKE THE NEXT TREND IS
ALREADY HERE...

THE GIG IS NOT OVER
YET, THEY SHOULD
STILL BE INSIDE...

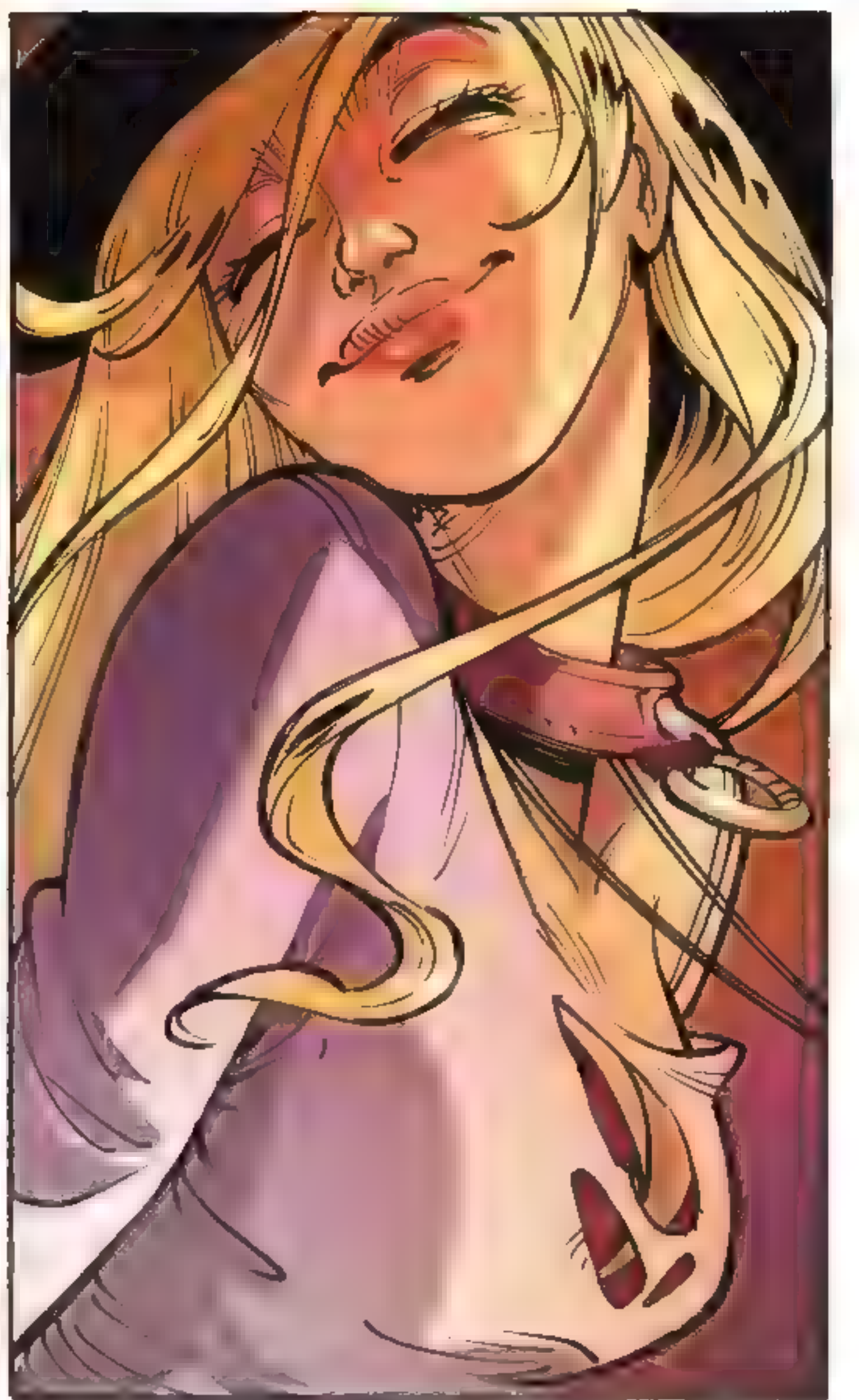
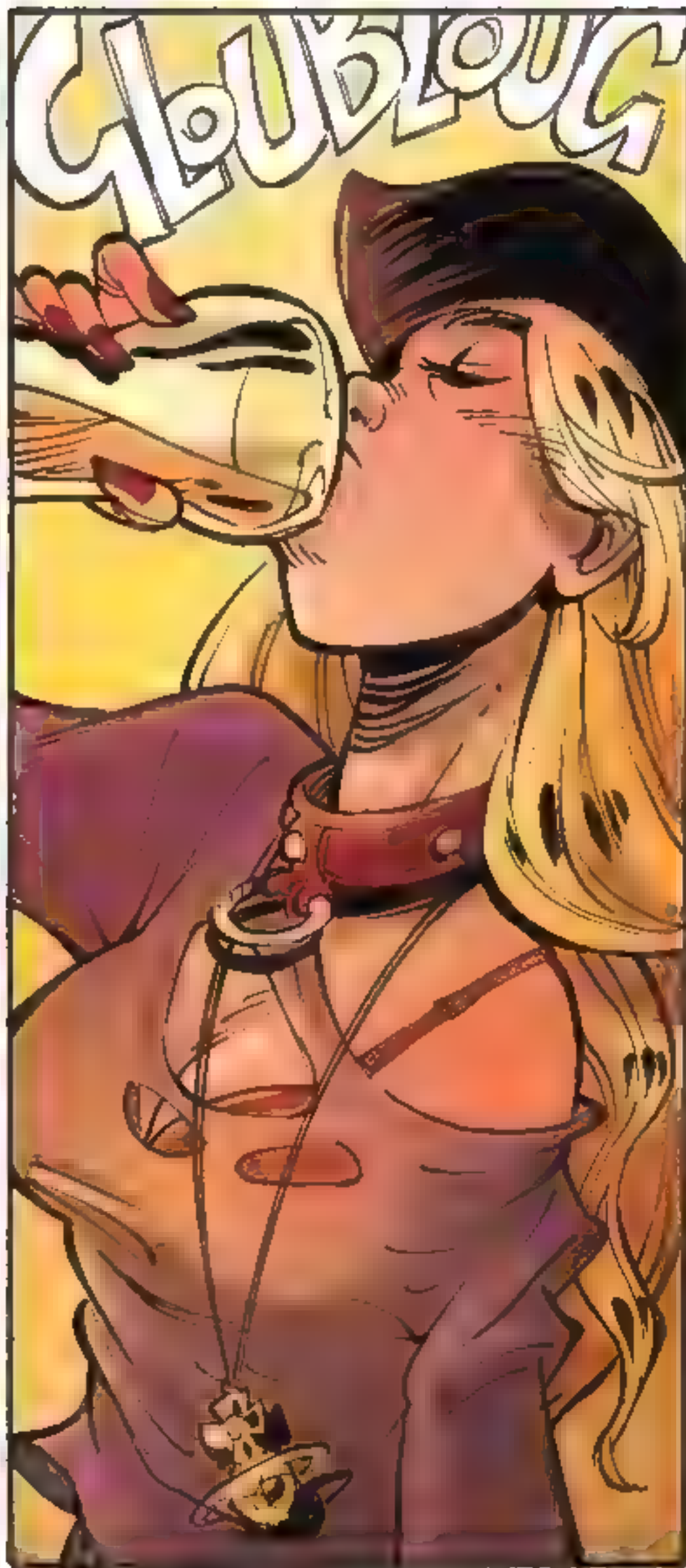
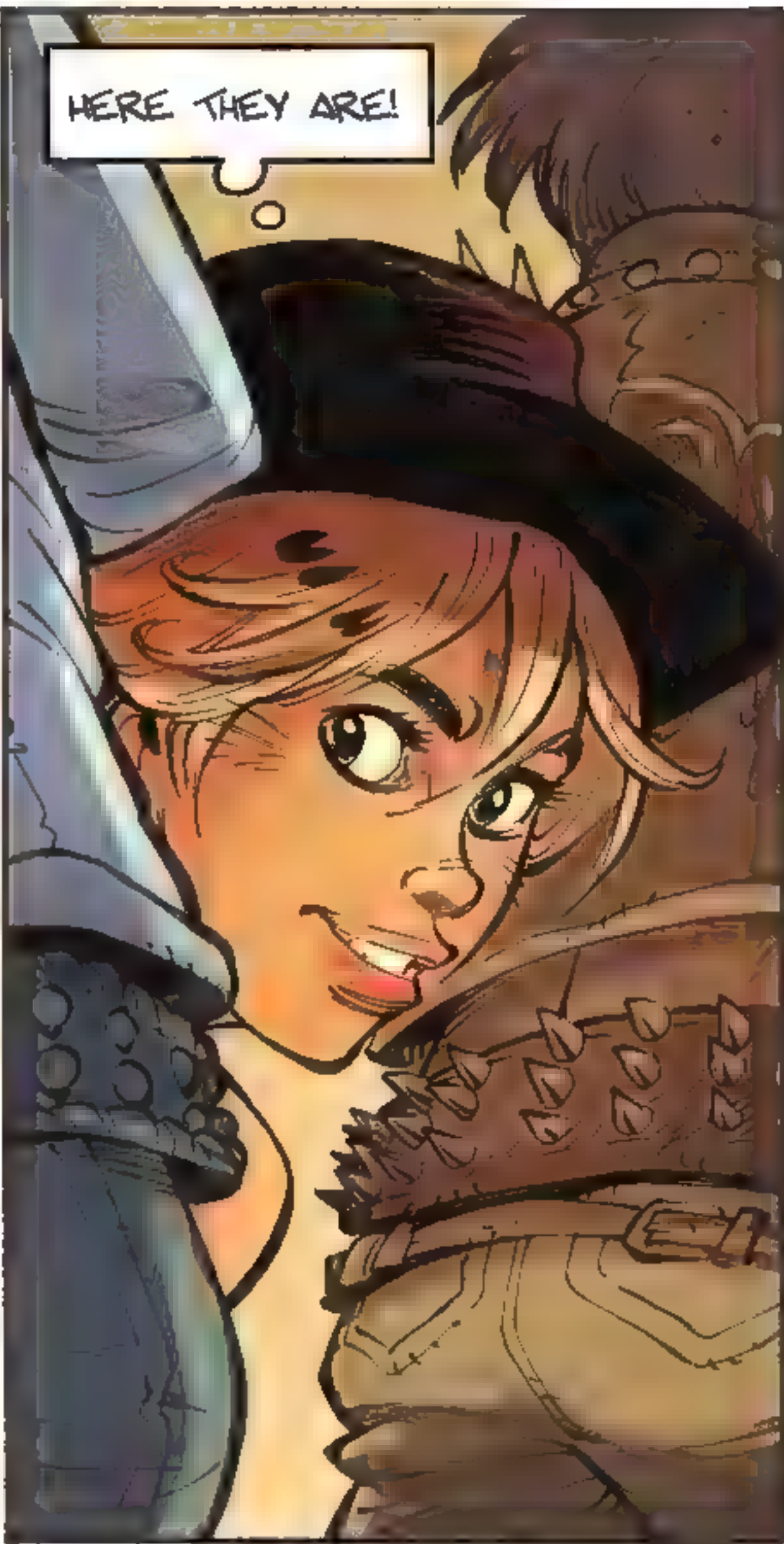
THE GG IS NOT OVER
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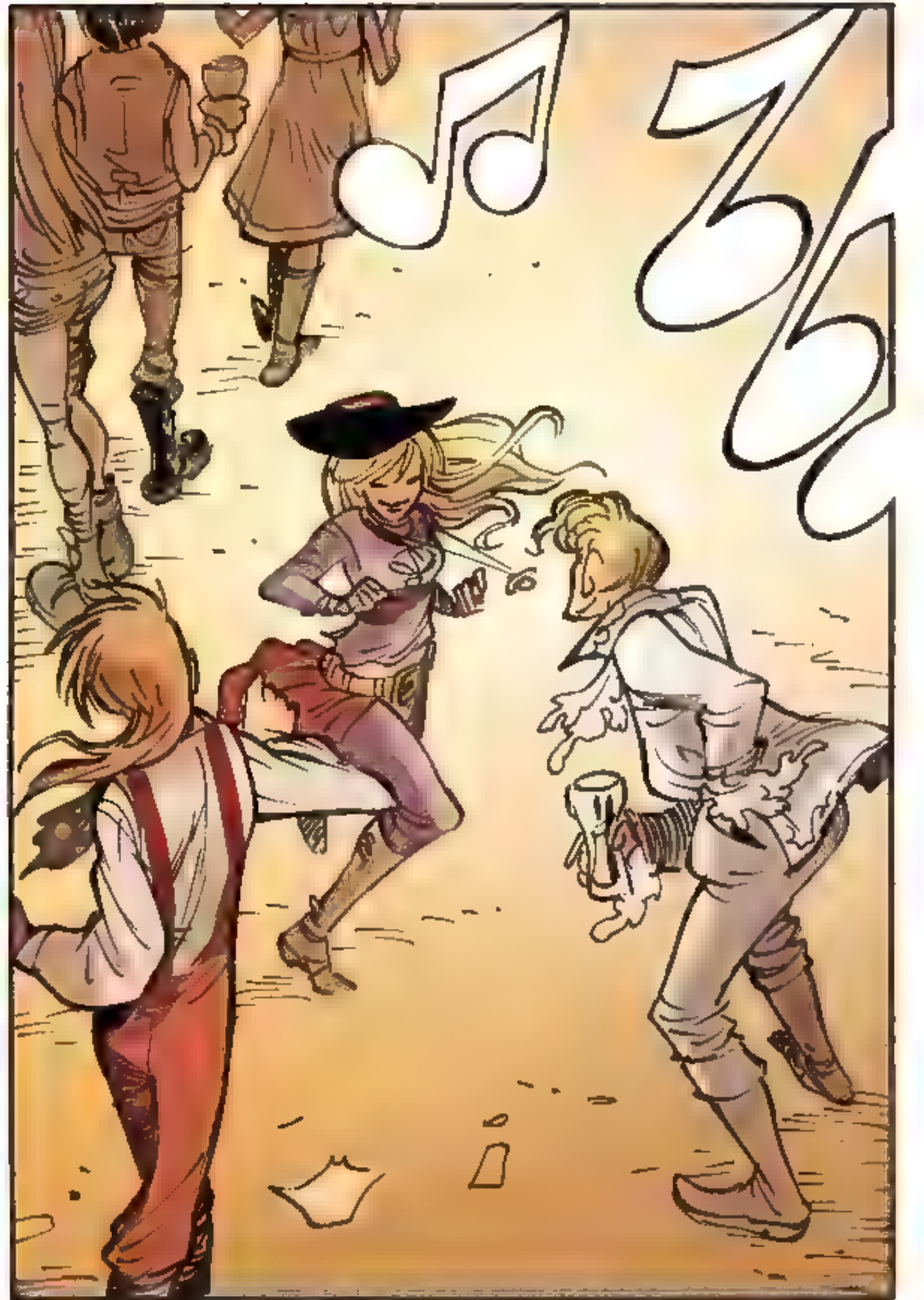
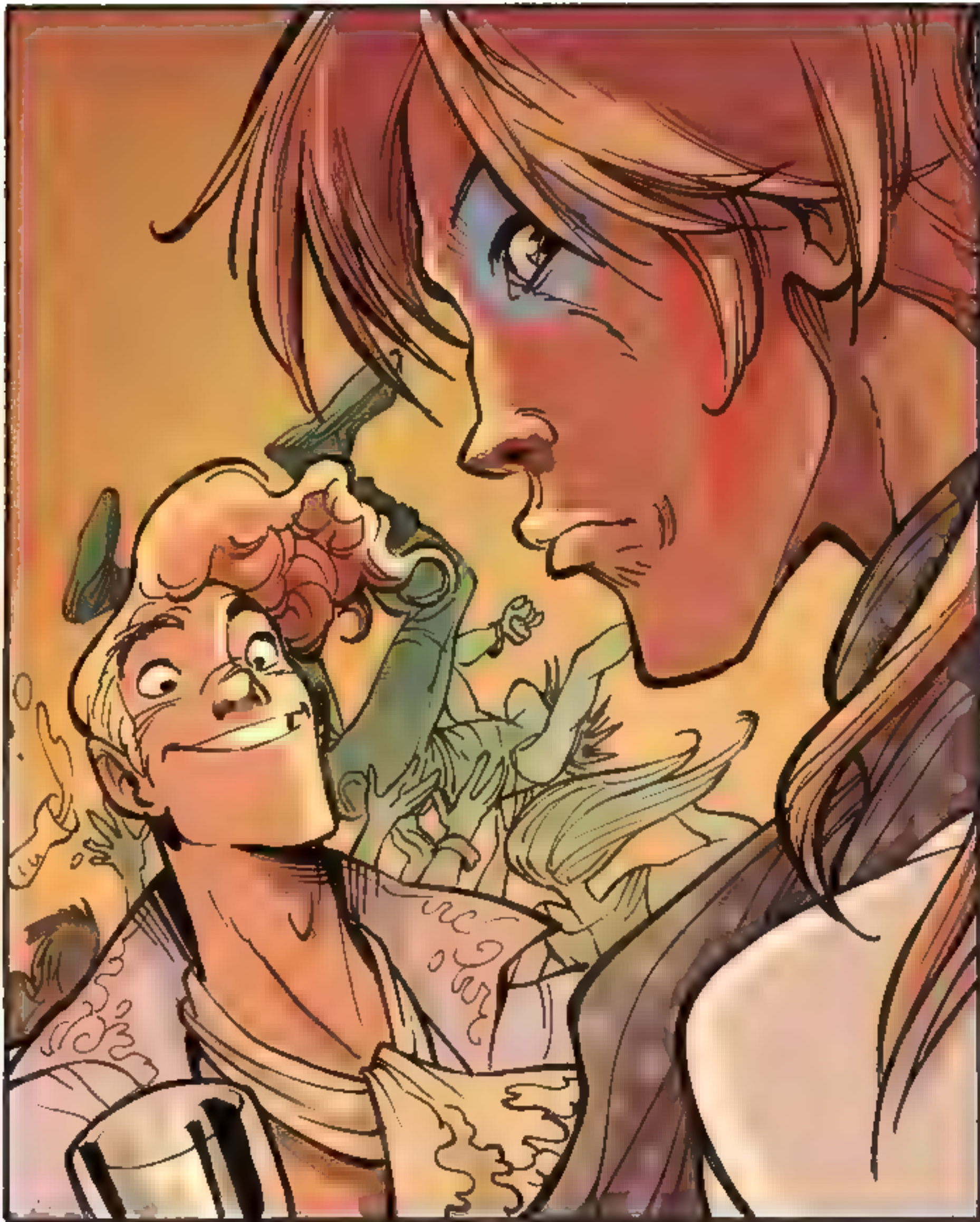
A comic book illustration of a man with a mohawk, a bandage on his cheek, and a chain around his neck, shouting 'WHYY!!' in a red, distressed environment.

PARDON. SORRY, PARDON. SORRY...

COLLO I HAVE...

A close-up comic panel of a blonde woman with a surprised expression, holding a glass of beer. A speech bubble above her says "A PINT, LIKE EVERYONE ELSE!" and a smaller one to her left says "Ah!".

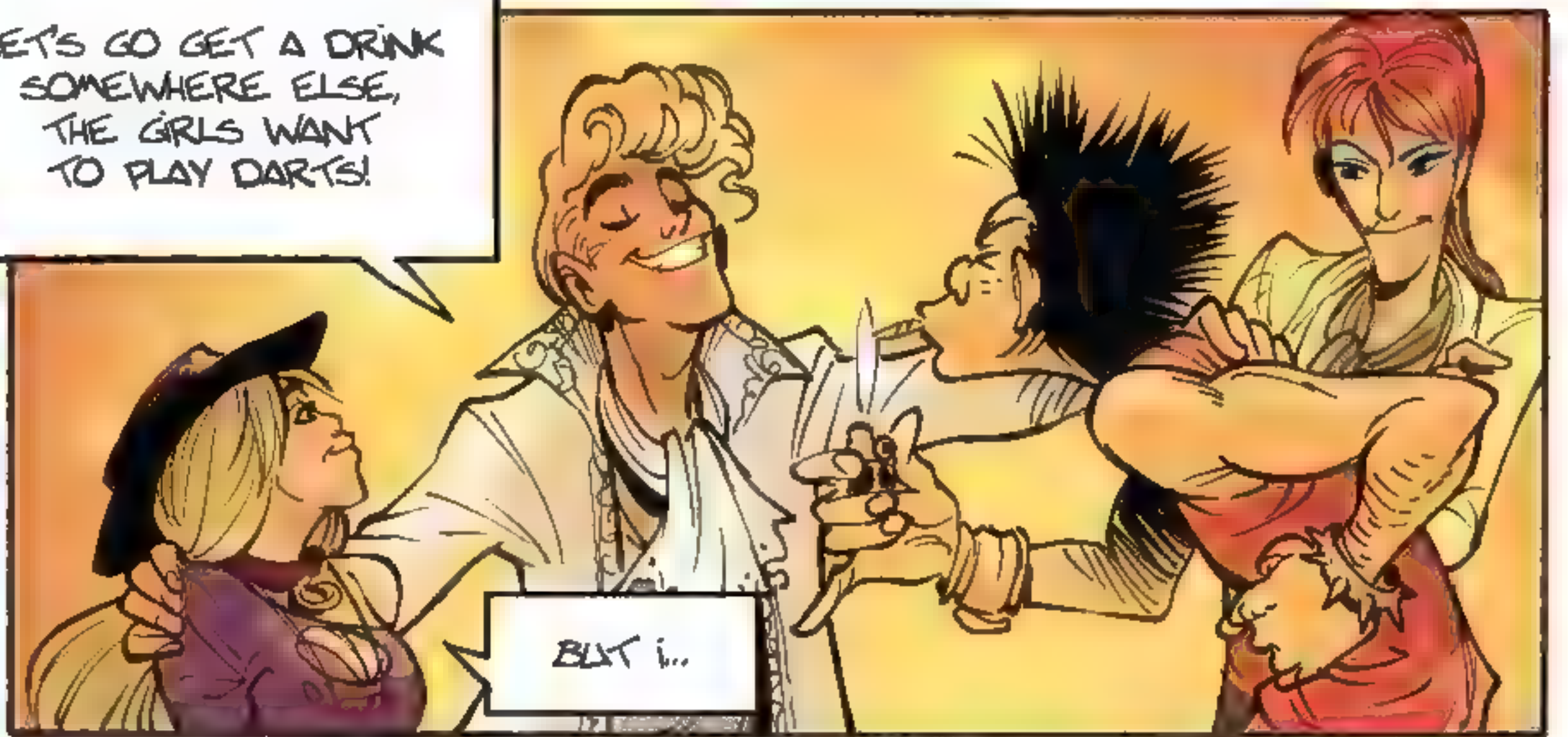






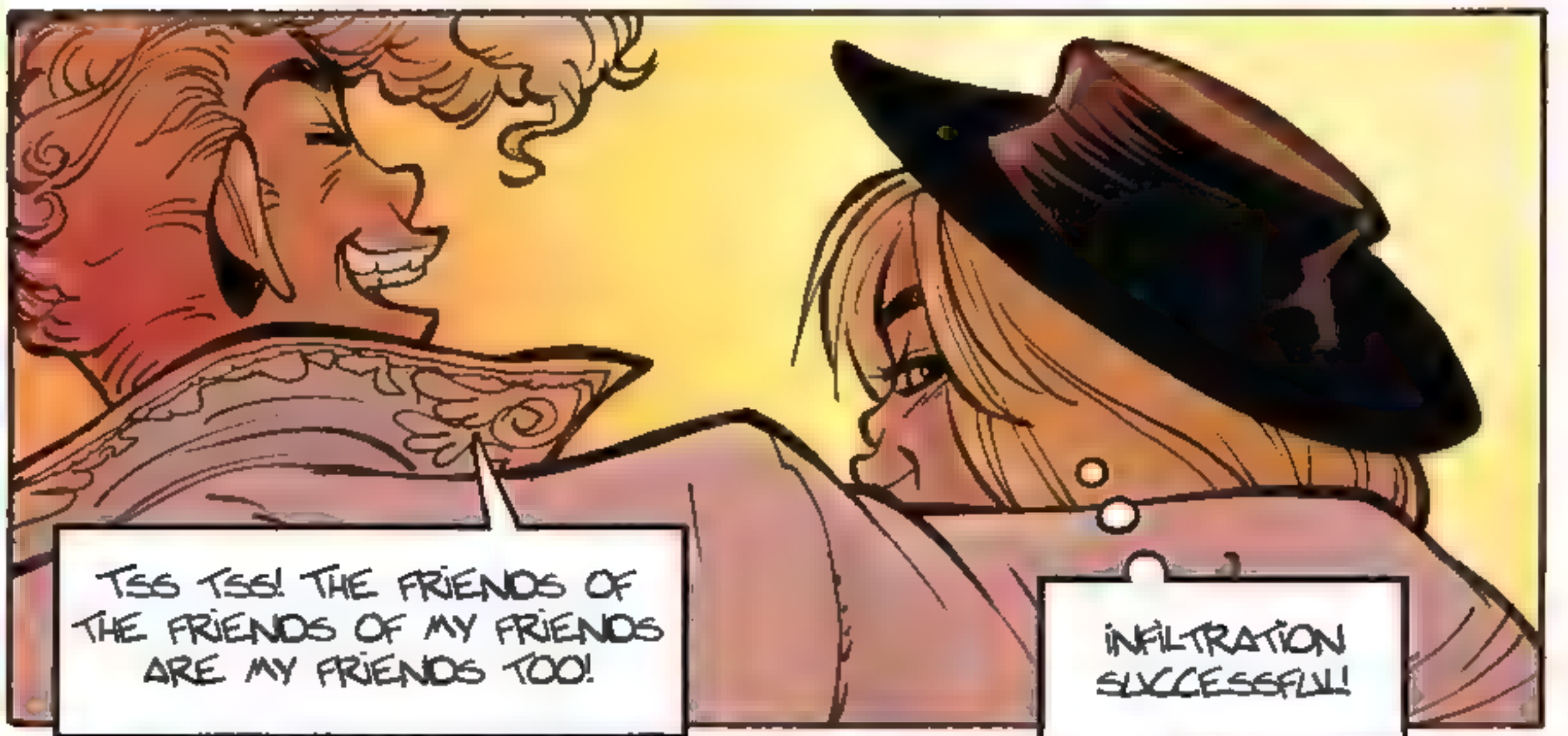
MEET LYDON!
THE GREATEST PUNK
STAR ON THIS SIDE
OF THE THAMES!
AND THIS IS, UH...

FOURMILE!



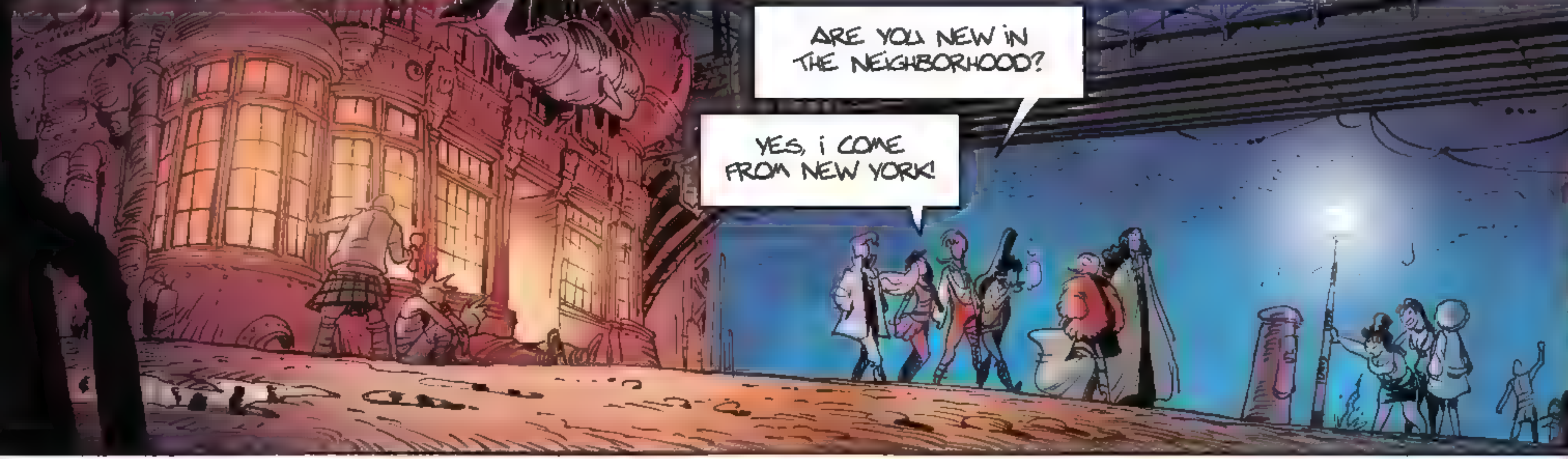
LET'S GO GET A DRINK
SOMEWHERE ELSE,
THE GIRLS WANT
TO PLAY DARTS!

BUT I...



YESS YESS! THE FRIENDS OF
THE FRIENDS OF MY FRIENDS
ARE MY FRIENDS TOO!

INFILTRATION
SUCCESSFUL!



ARE YOU NEW IN
THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

YES, I COME
FROM NEW YORK!



AH, THAT'S
WHY YOU'VE
GOT A
PARISIAN
ACCENT!



WATCH OUT!

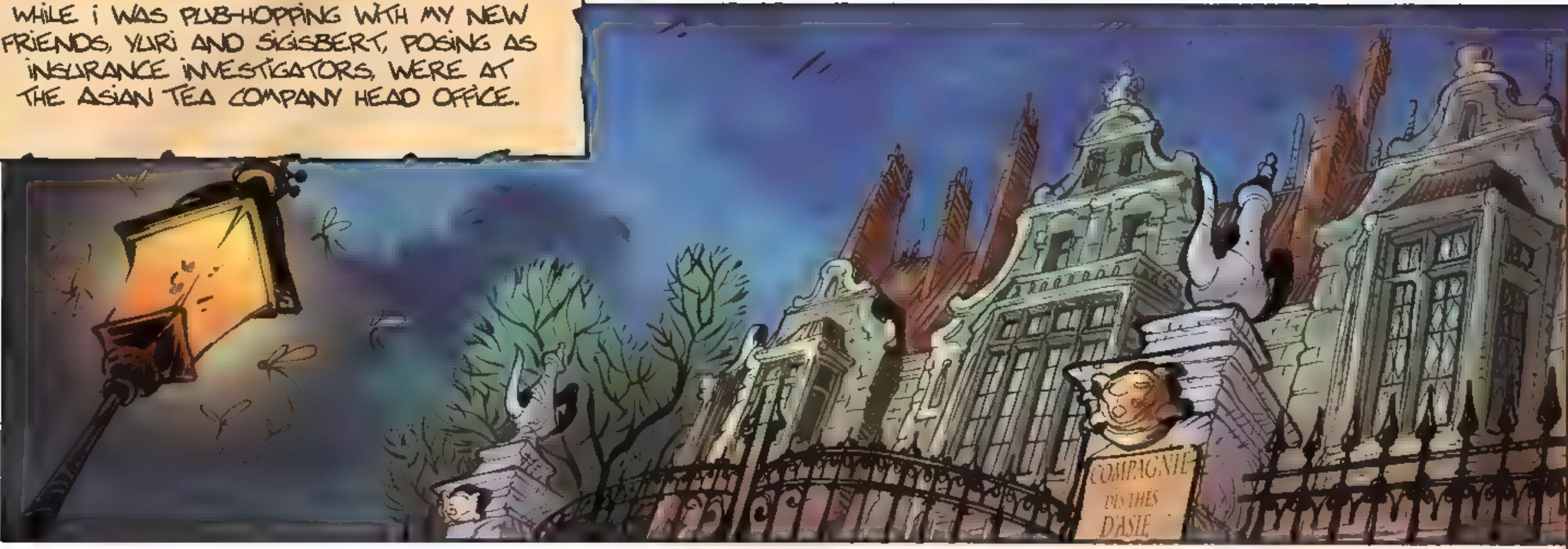
BE CAREFUL HERE, THERE ARE
ALWAYS SOME BLOKES CROSSING
THE STREET IN GROUPS OF
FOUR. IT'S VERY DANGEROUS!

THEY GO STRAIGHT AHEAD
WITHOUT LOOKING! EVEN
CABS HAVE TO BE WARY!

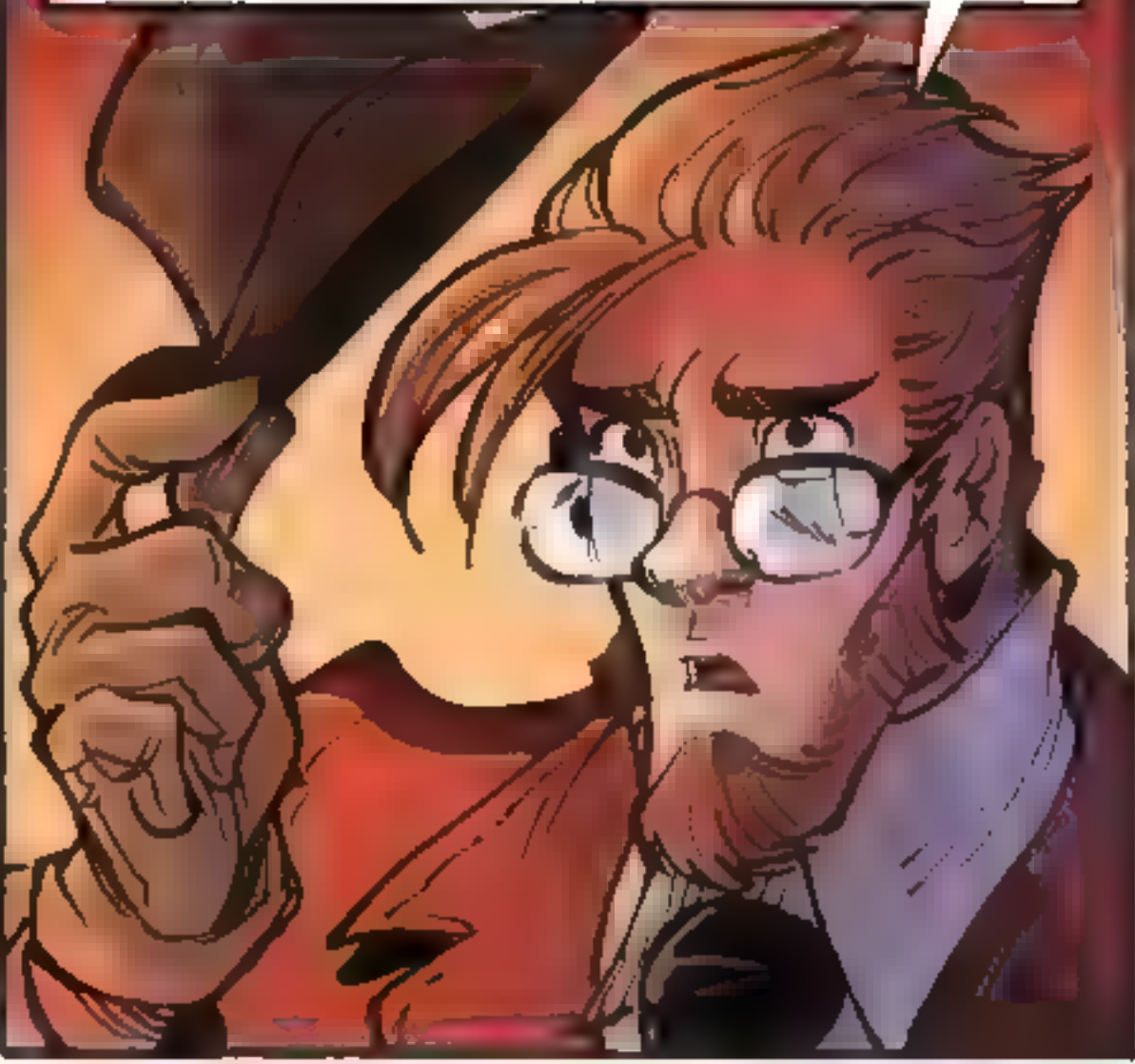


THEY COME FROM ABBEY
ROAD. THERE MUST BE A
MAD SCIENTIST DOING SOME
STRANGE STUFF, OVER THERE.

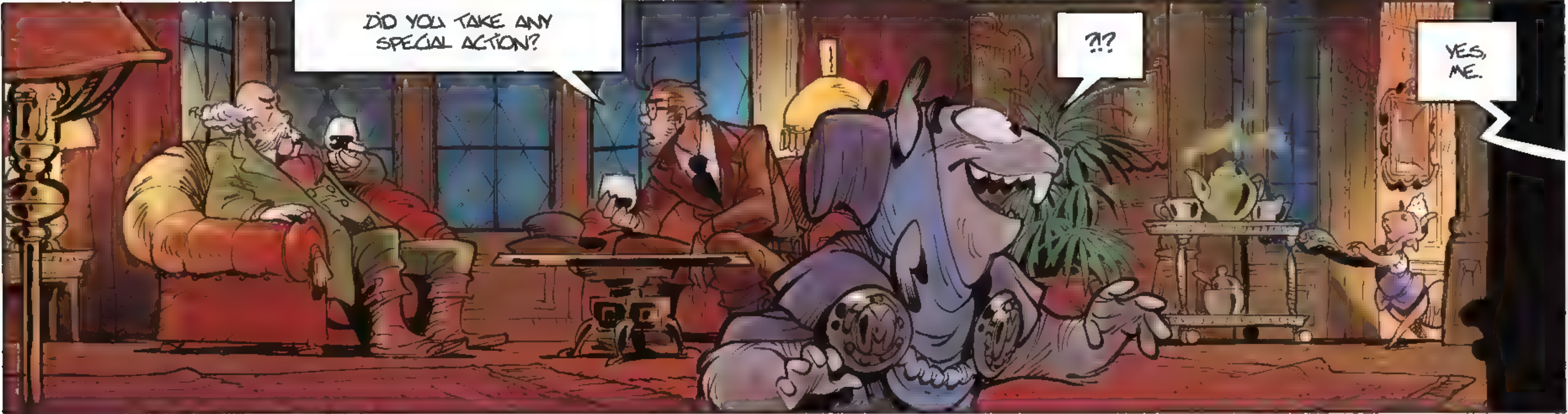
WHILE I WAS PUB-HOPPING WITH MY NEW FRIENDS, YURI AND SIGSBERT, POSING AS INSURANCE INVESTIGATORS, WERE AT THE ASIAN TEA COMPANY HEAD OFFICE.



THANK YOU FOR RECEIVING US SO LATE, SIR MARMADUKE!

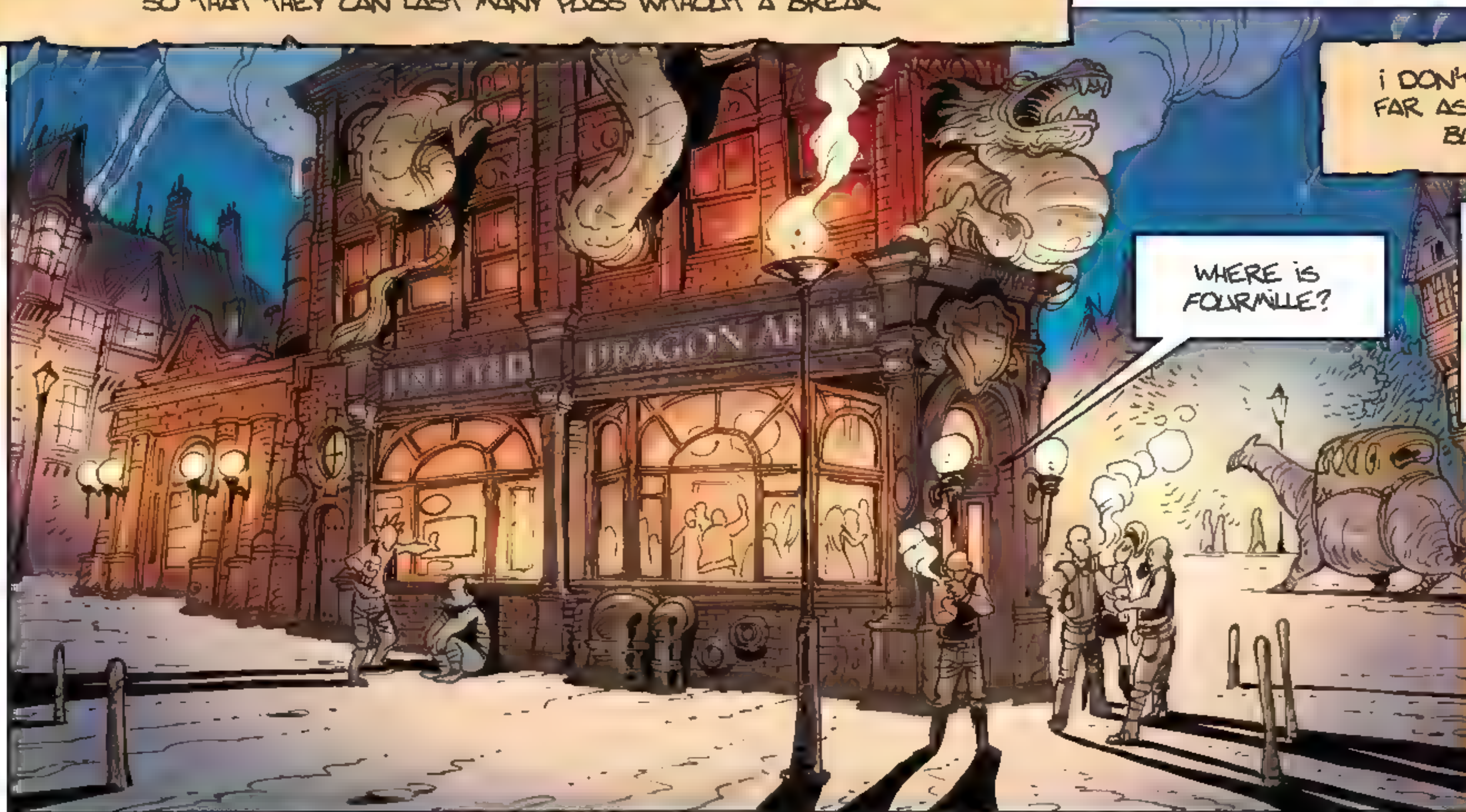


UNFORTUNATE, INDEED.





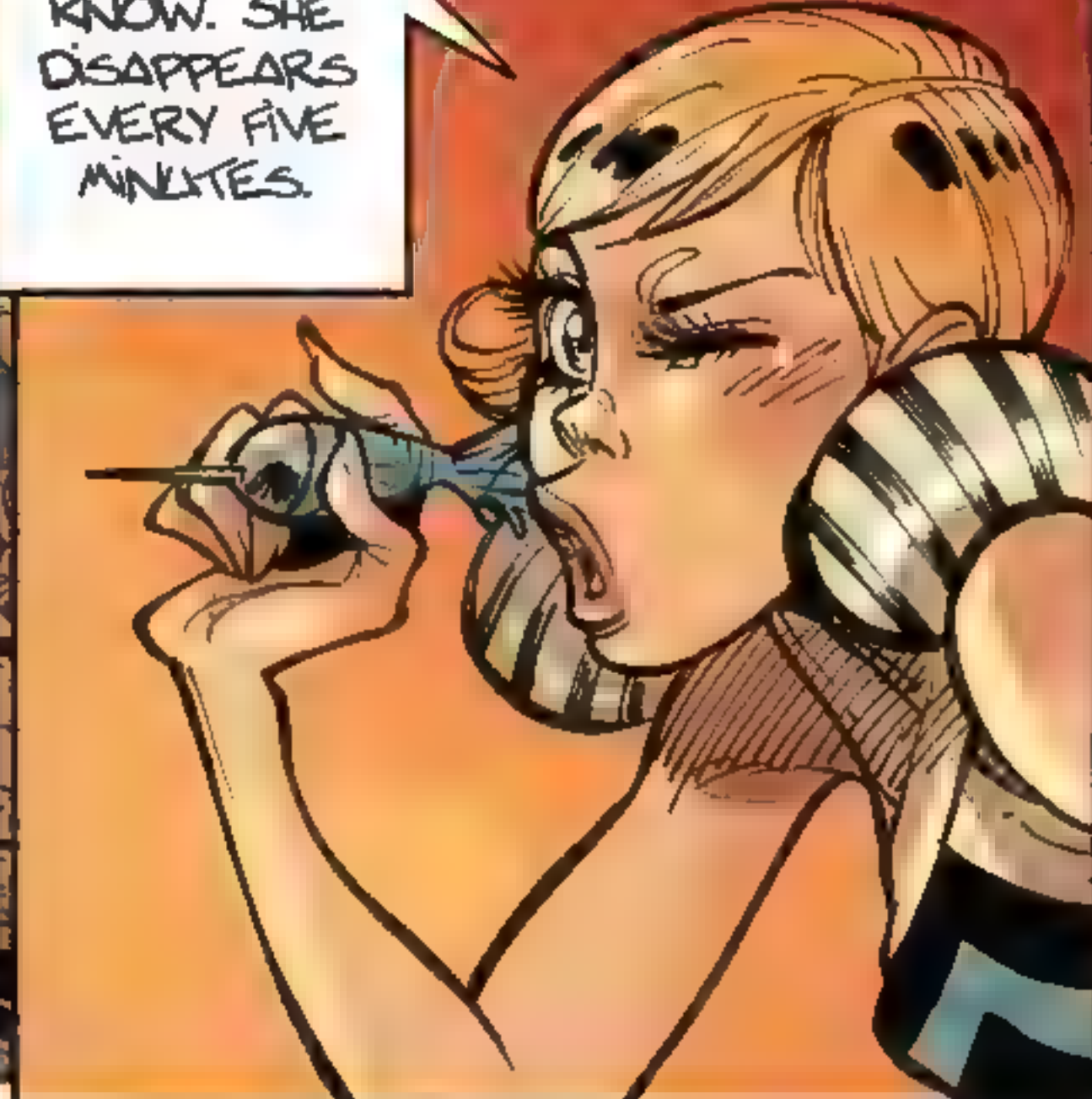
BRITONS ARE THE RESULT OF A SELECTIVE EVOLUTION: PINT AFTER PINT, GENERATION AFTER GENERATION, THEIR BLADDER HAS ADAPTED SO THAT THEY CAN LAST MANY PUBS WITHOUT A BREAK.



I DON'T SHARE THE SAME GENES SO, AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, YOU CAN NEVER BUY BEER, YOU JUST RENT IT.

WHERE IS FOURMILE?

I DON'T KNOW. SHE DISAPPEARS EVERY FIVE MINUTES.



YOU HAVE TO KNOCK BEFORE LEAVING THE LOO.



SERIOUSLY! COULDN'T THEY PUT THE TARGET SOMEWHERE ELSE?

YES, BUT IT'S MORE FUN THIS WAY.

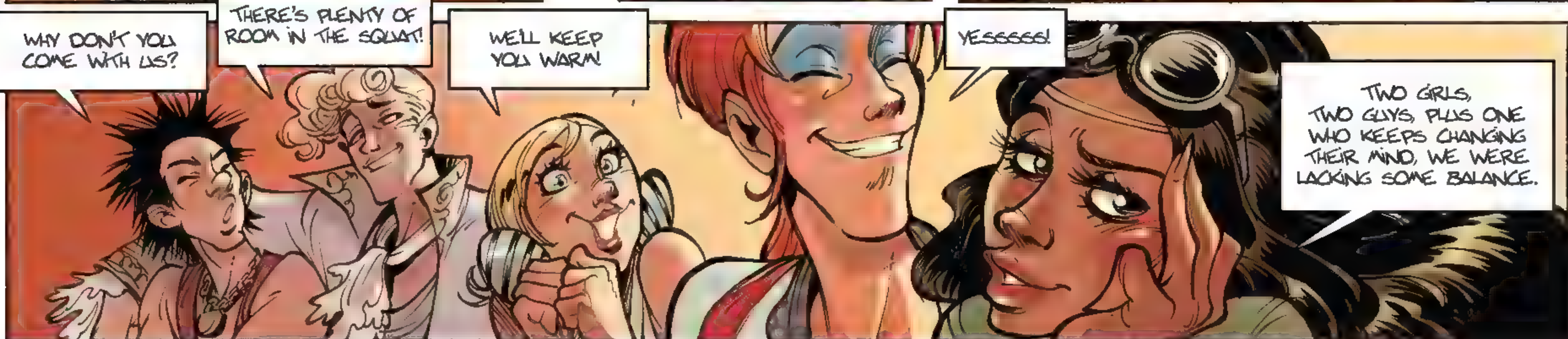


LAST ROUND BEFORE CLOSING TIME!



WHERE DO YOU CRASH?

HERE AND THERE, I DON'T REALLY HAVE A PLACE.



WHY DON'T YOU COME WITH US?

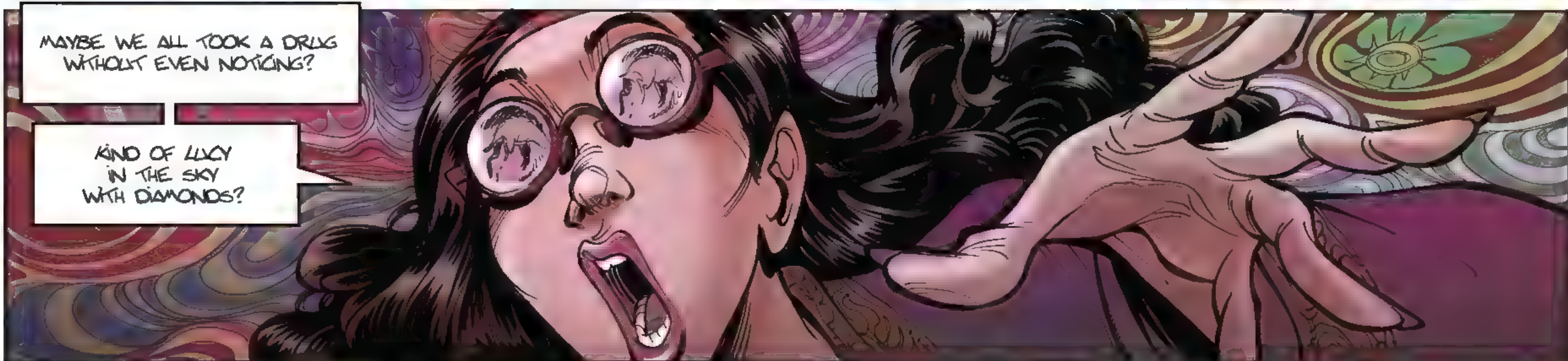
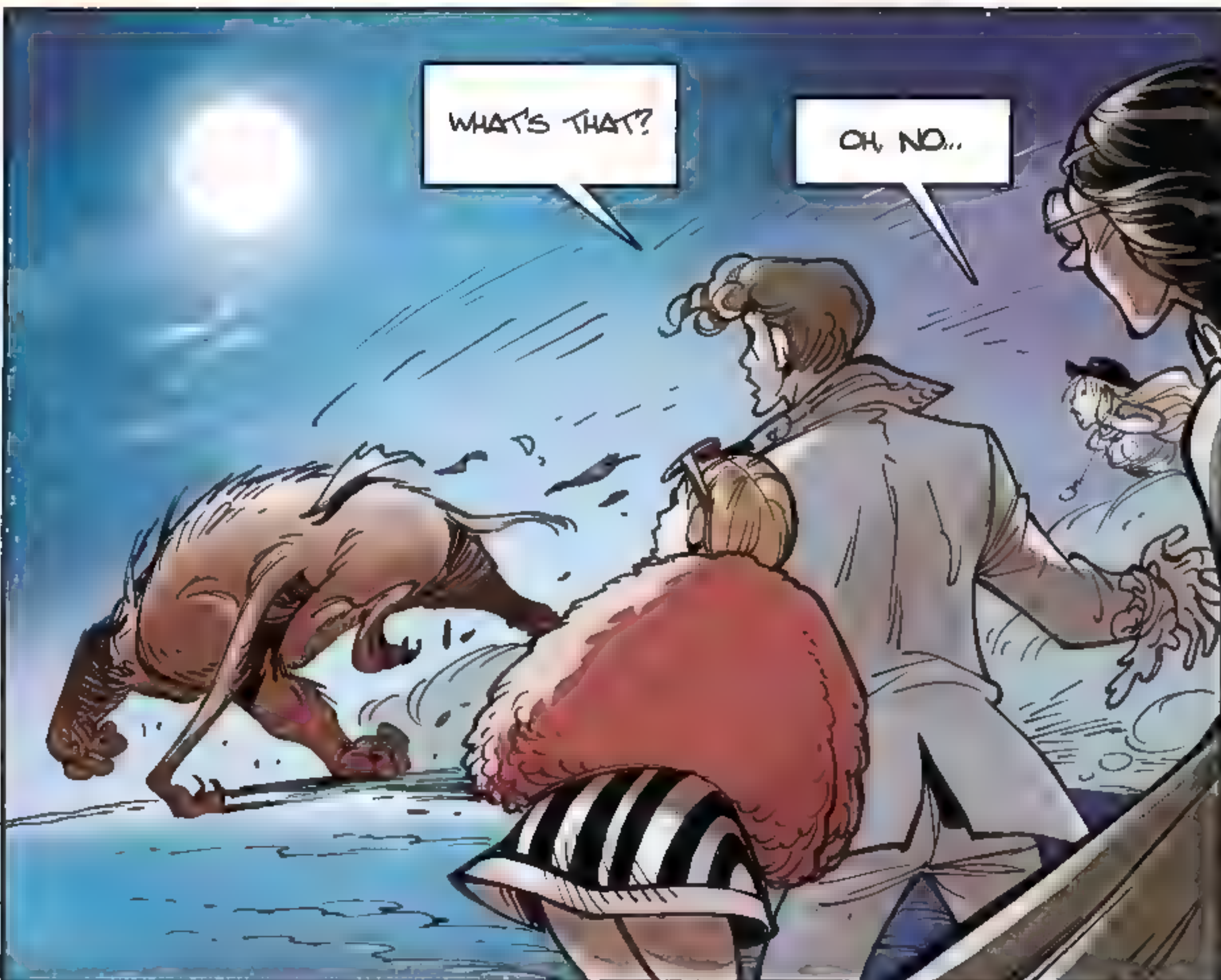
THERE'S PLENTY OF ROOM IN THE SQUAT!

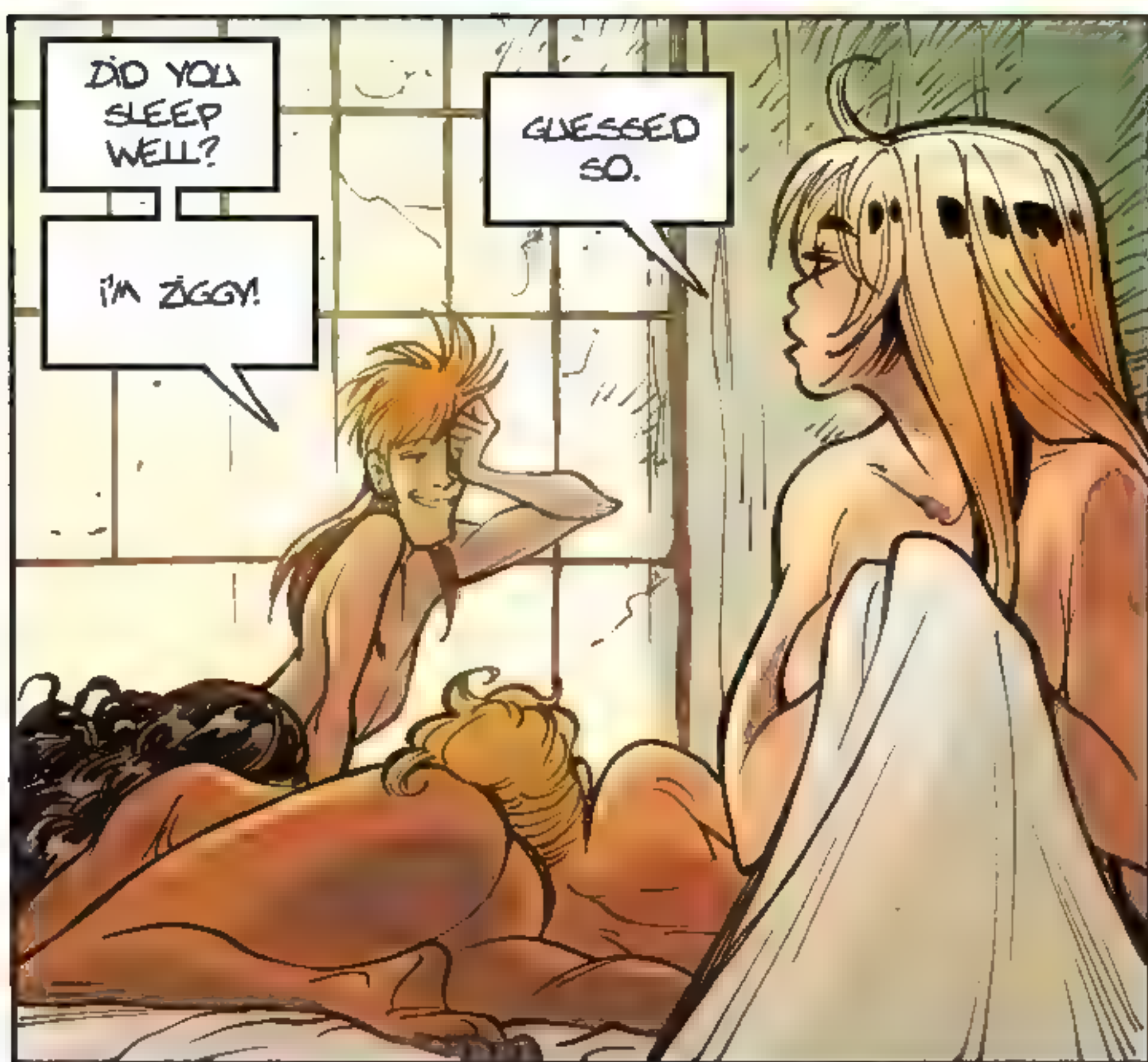
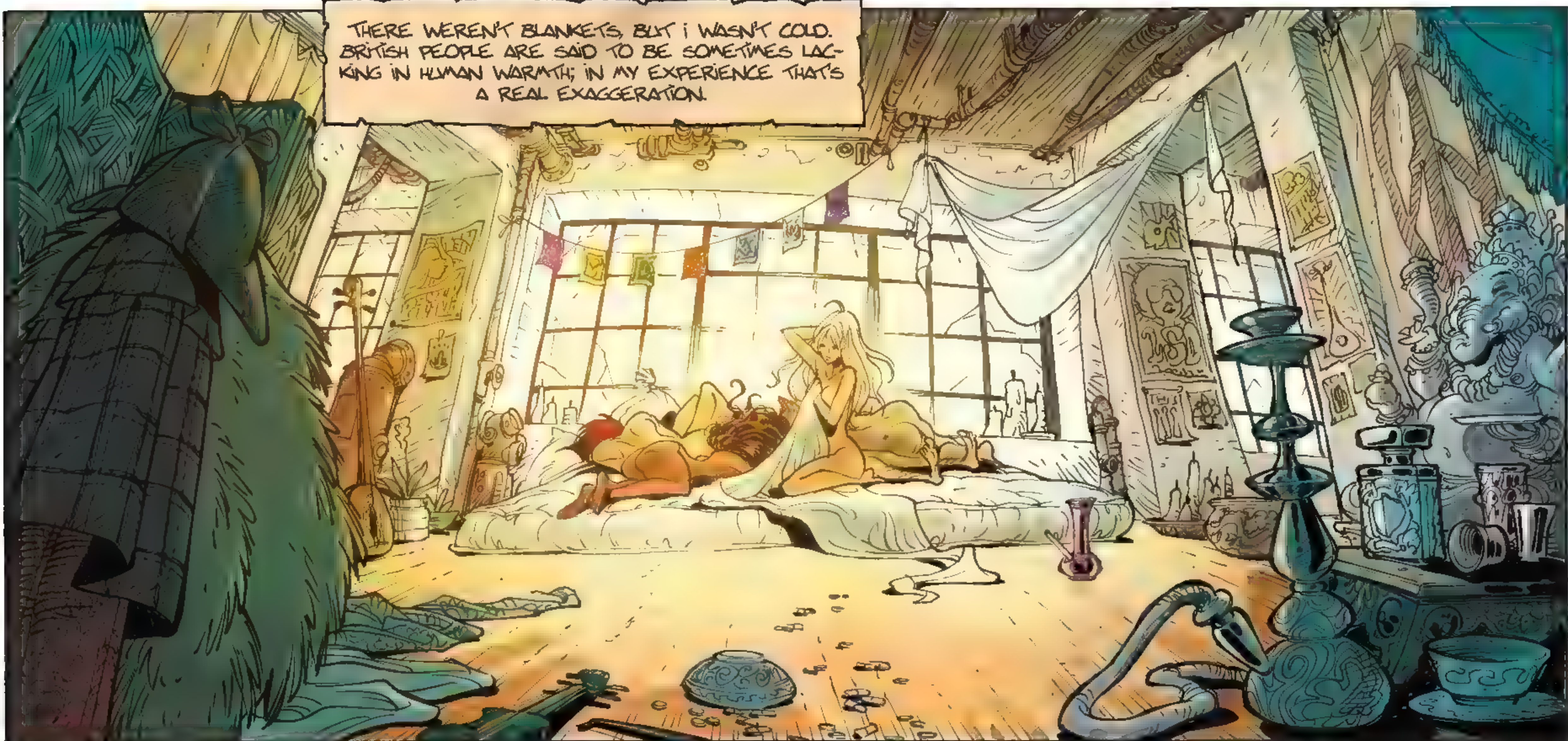
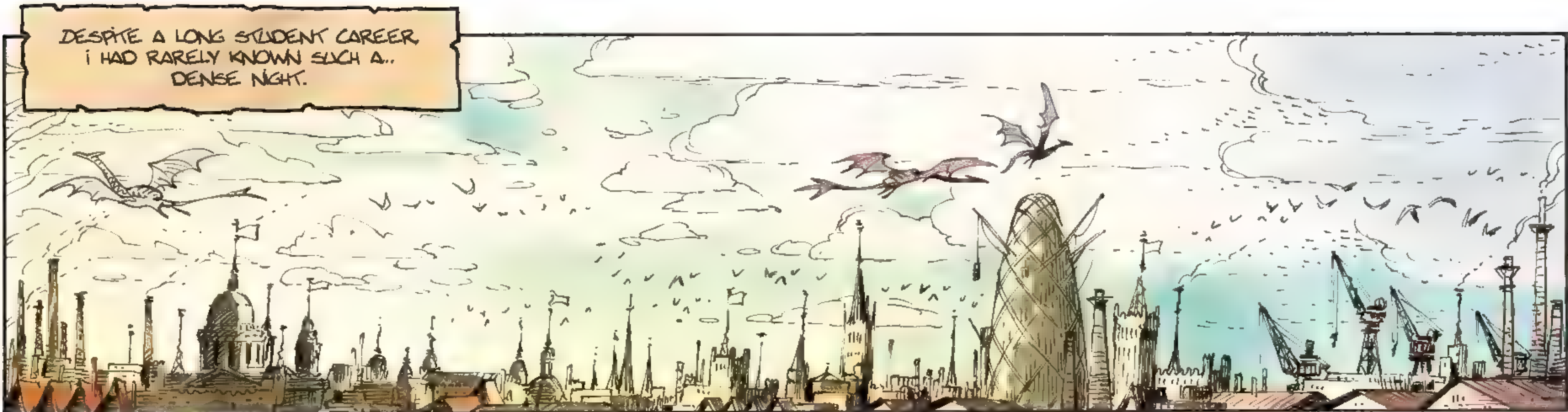
WE'LL KEEP YOU WARM!

YESSSSSS!

TWO GIRLS, TWO GUYS, PLUS ONE WHO KEEPS CHANGING THEIR MIND, WE WERE LACKING SOME BALANCE.

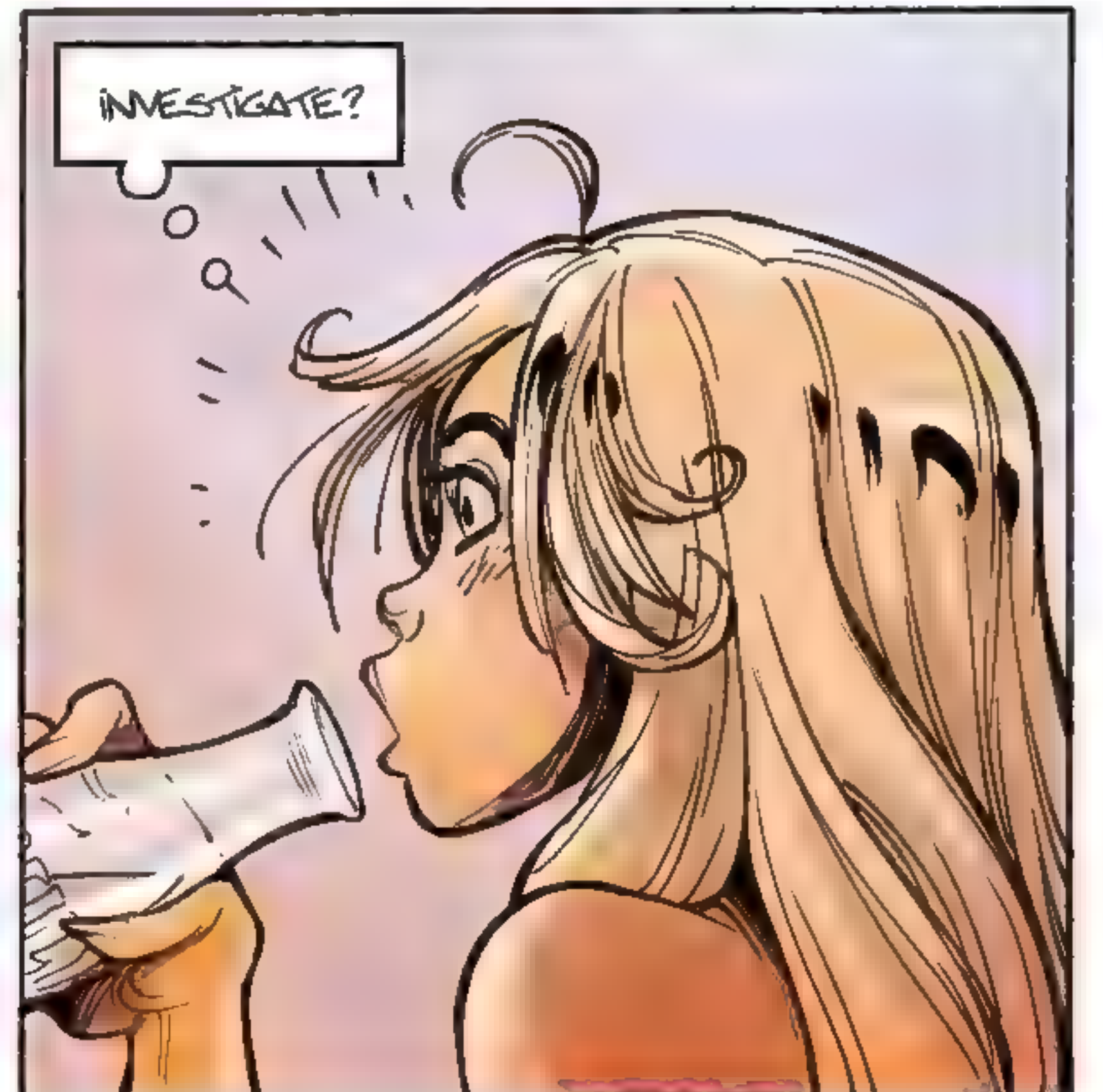
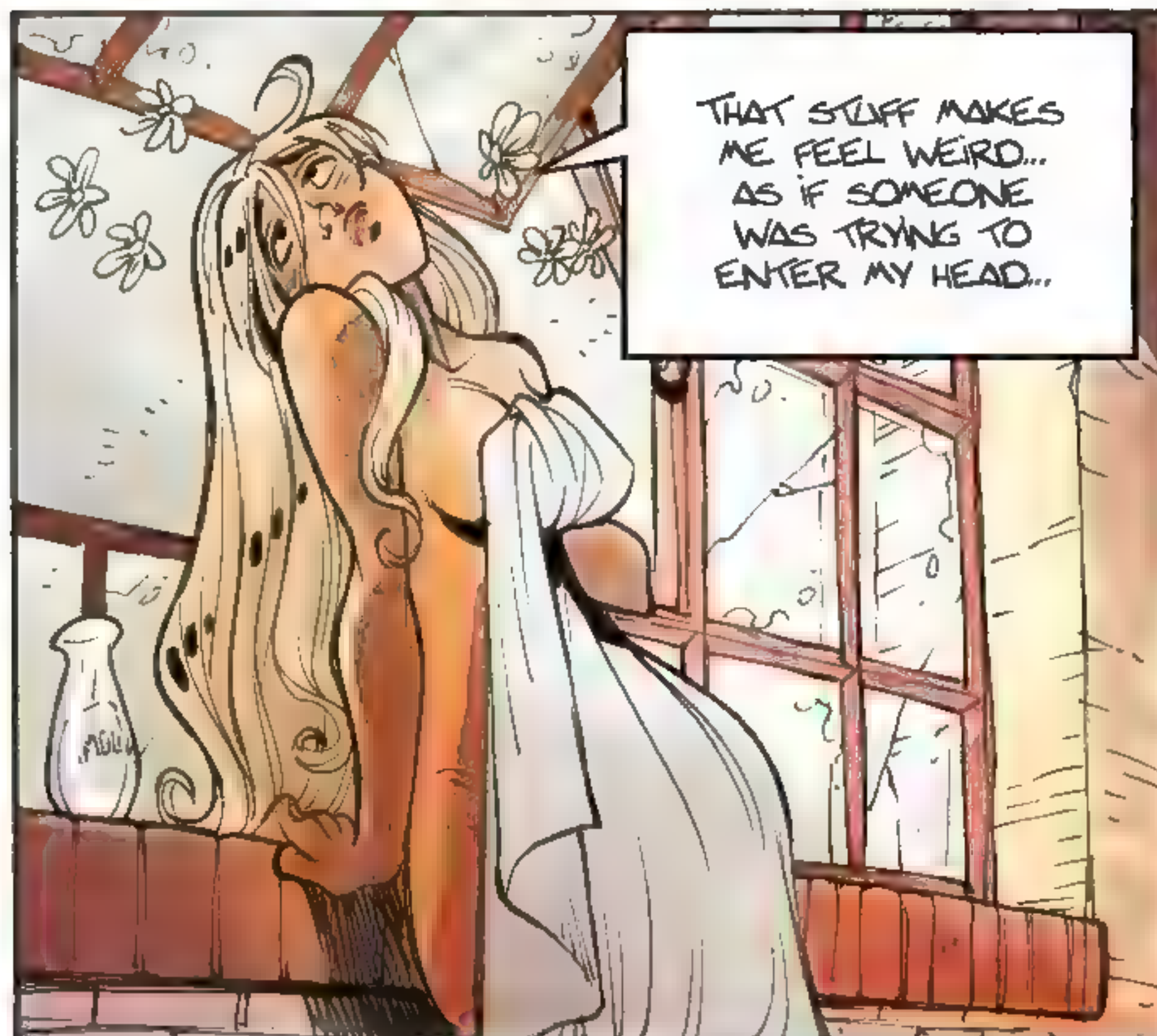
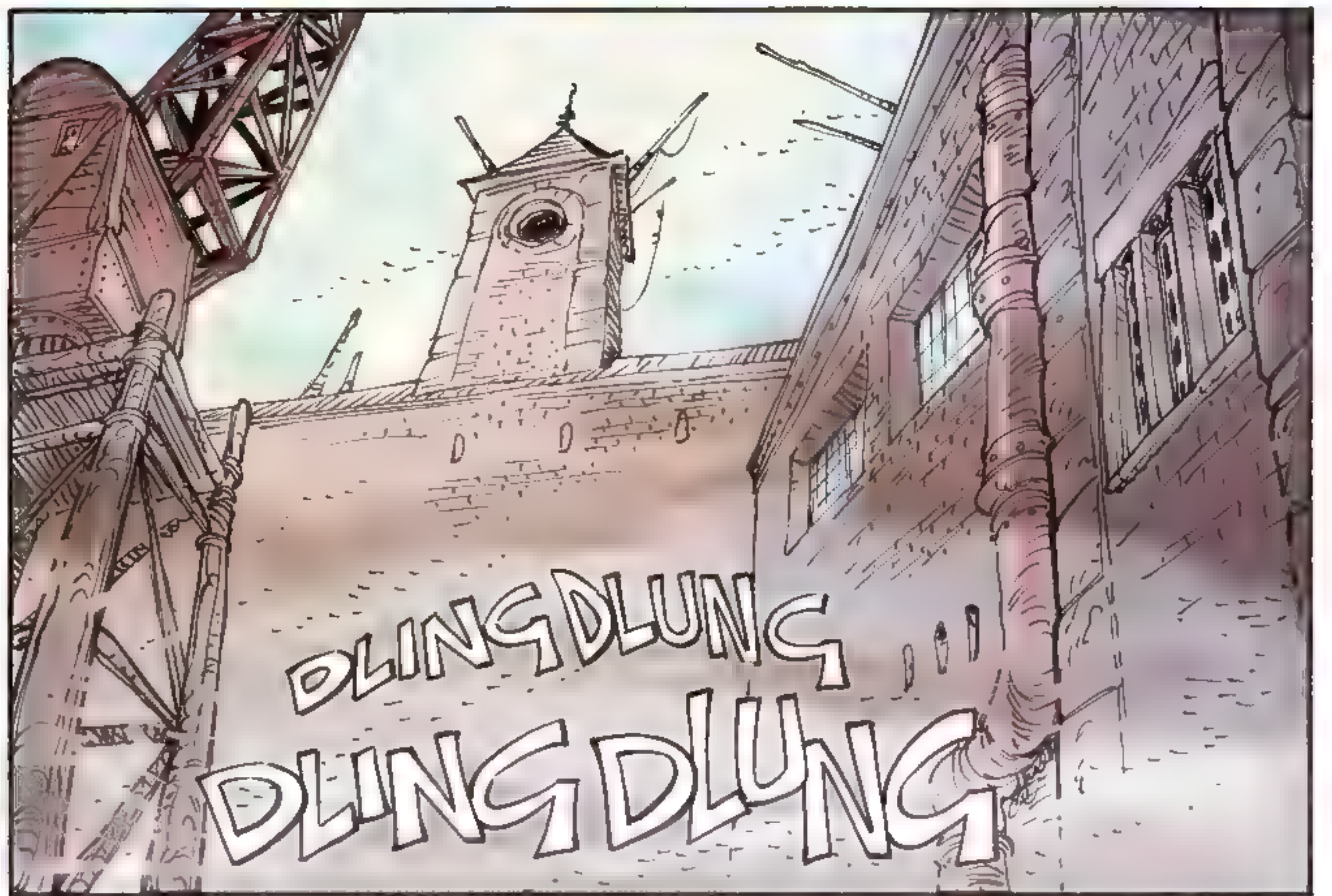


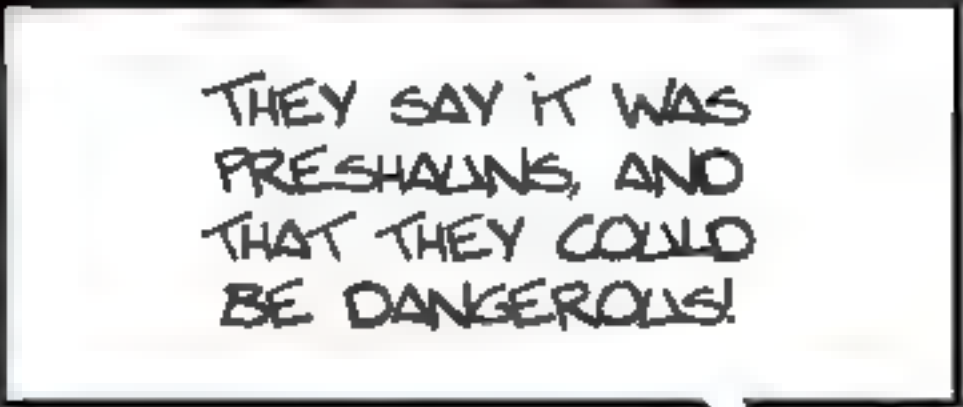
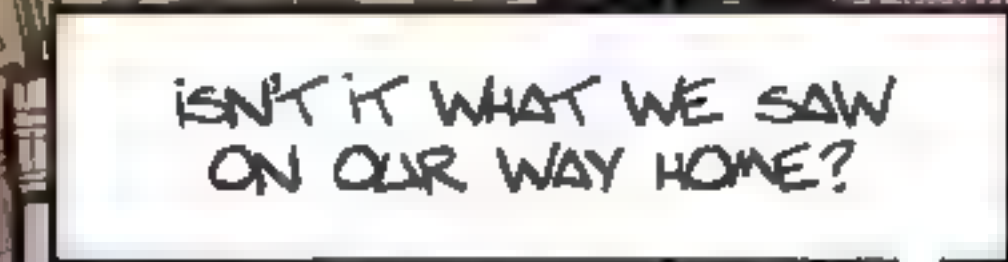
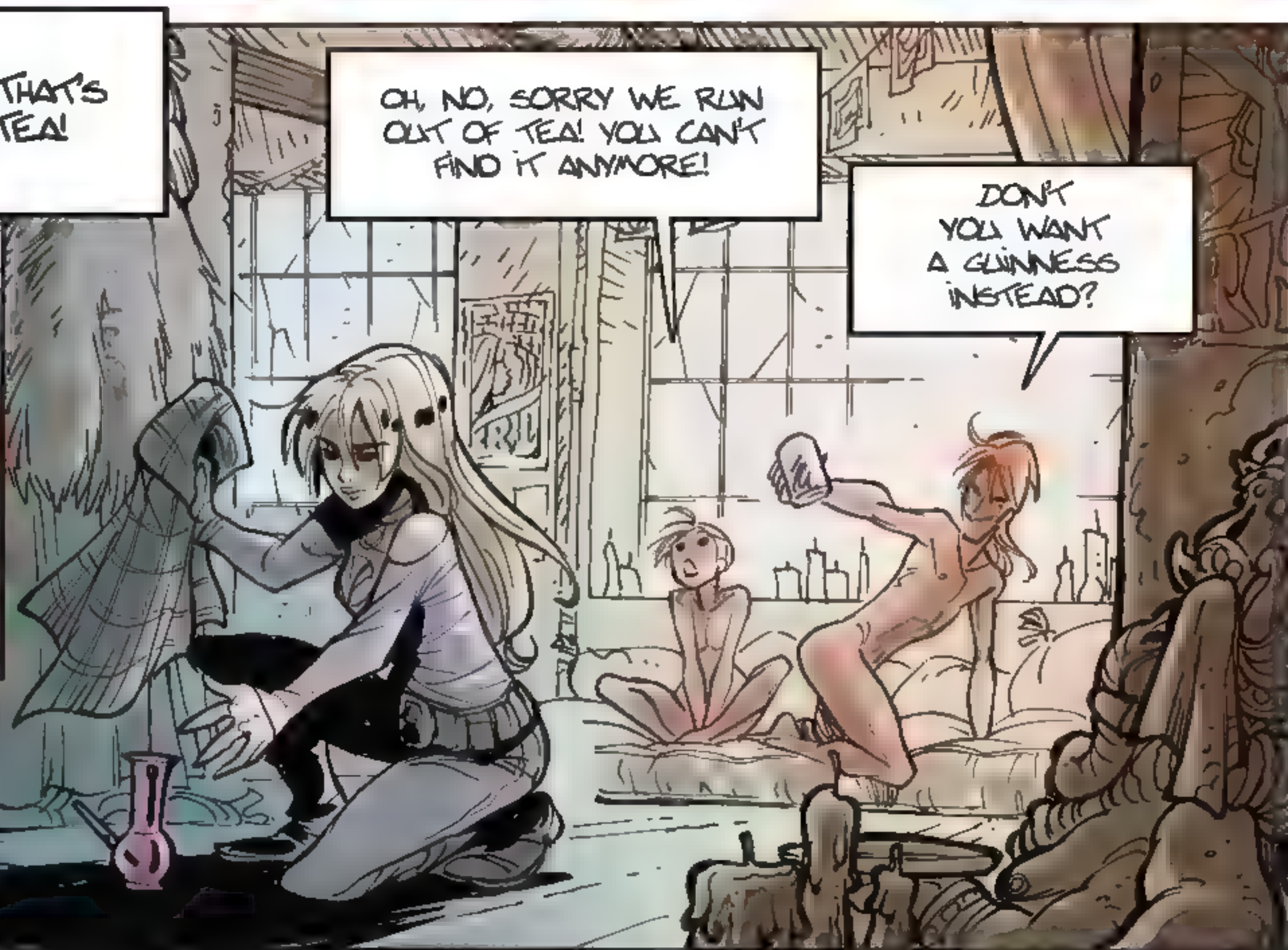
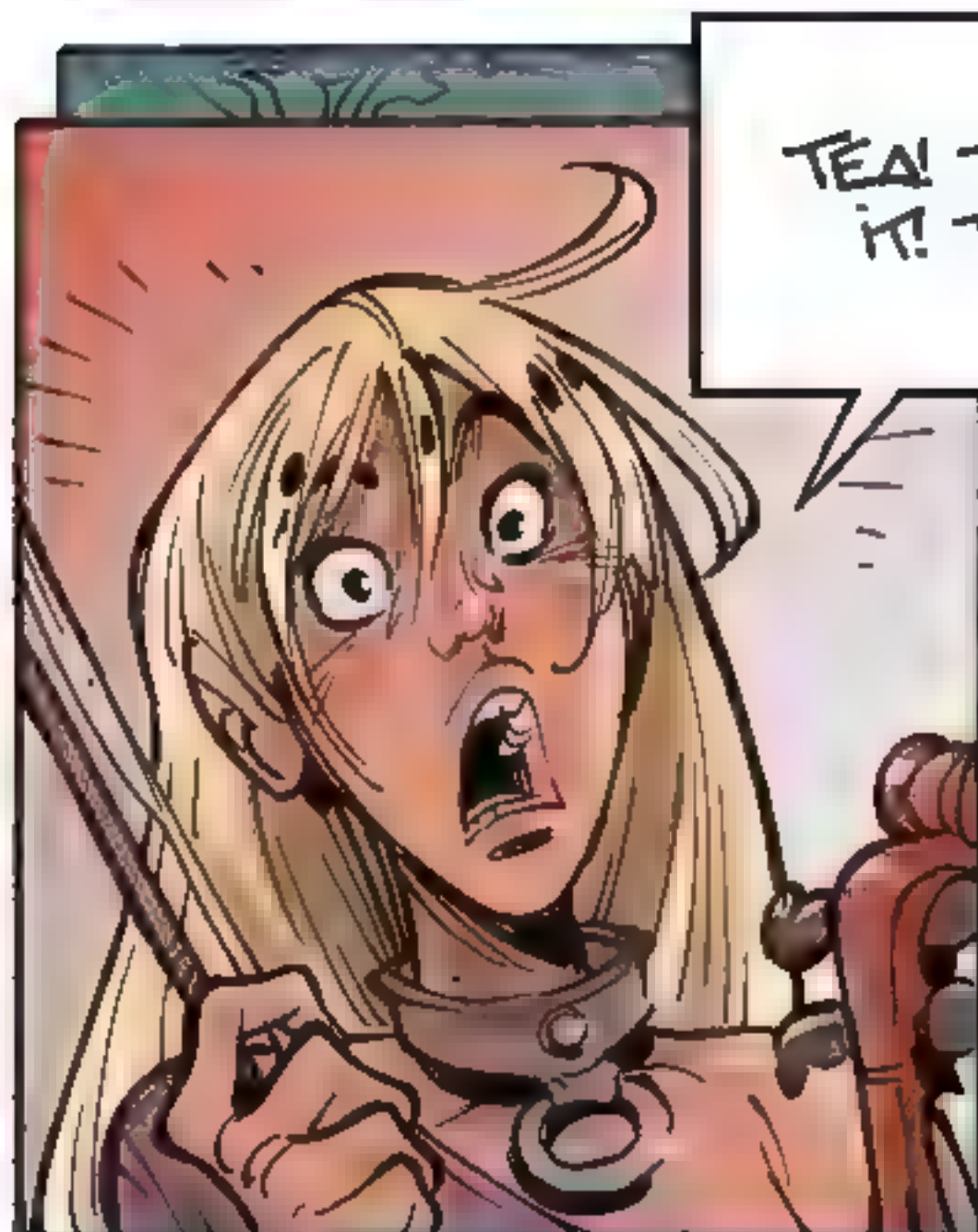
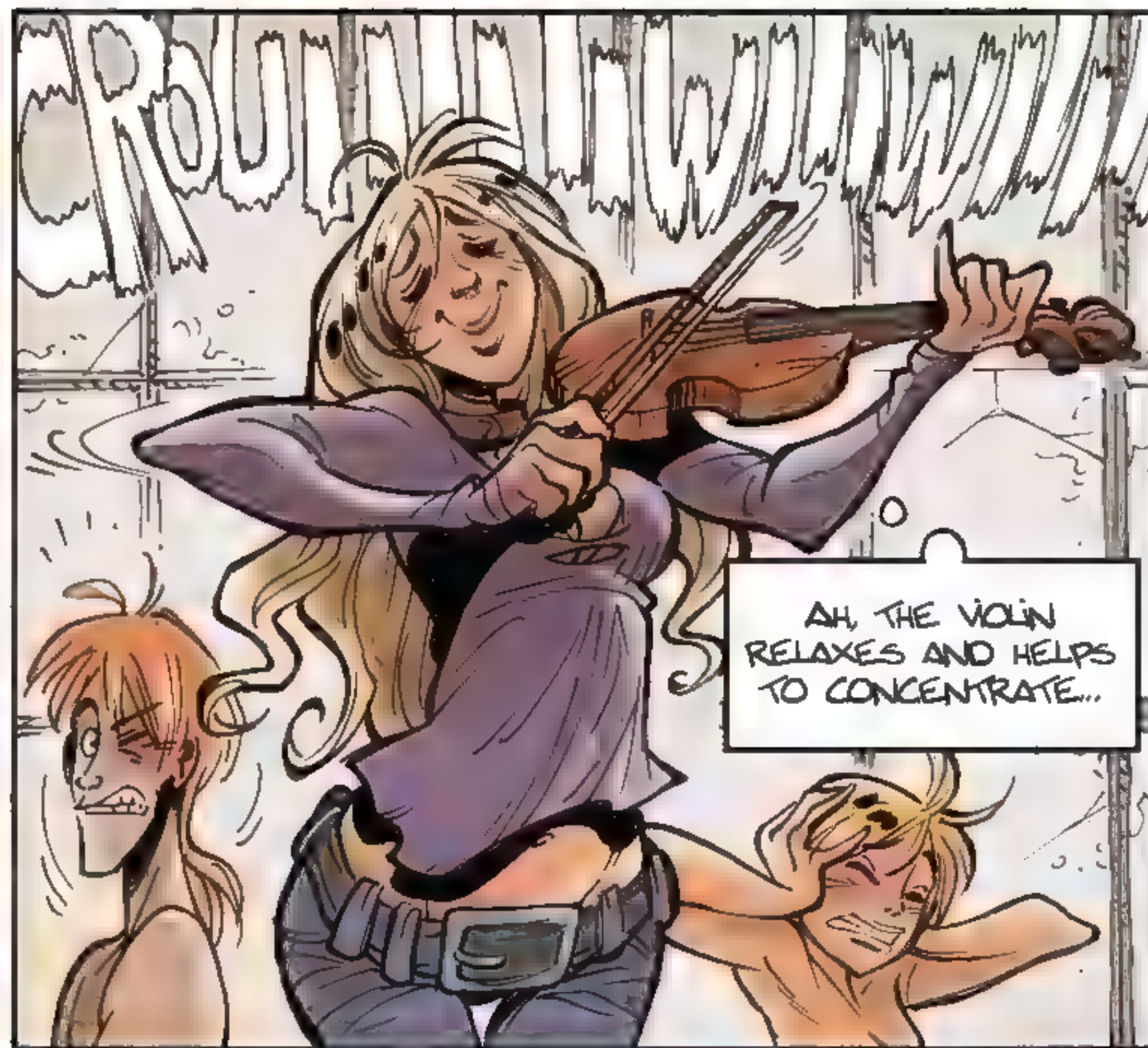


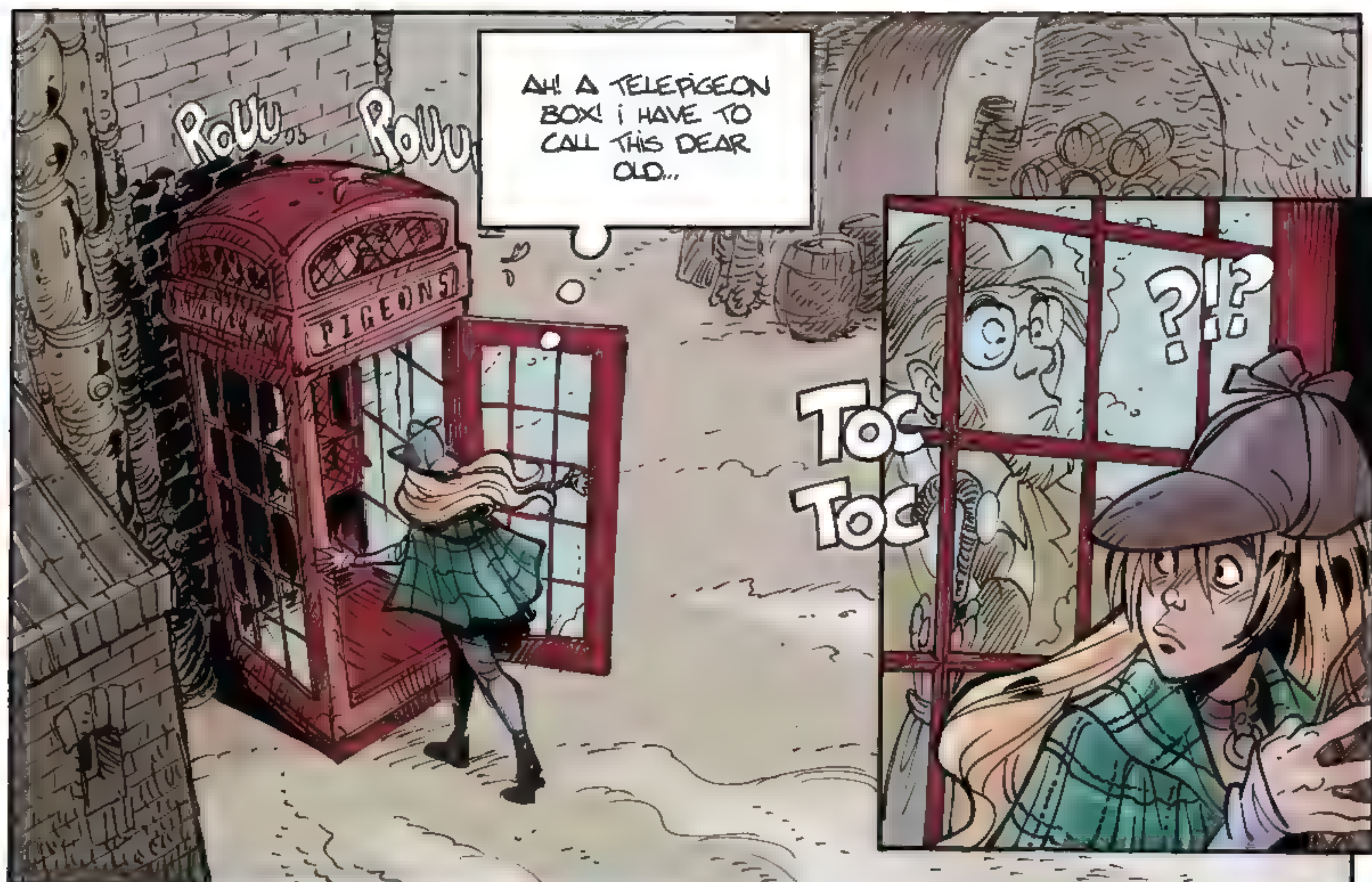
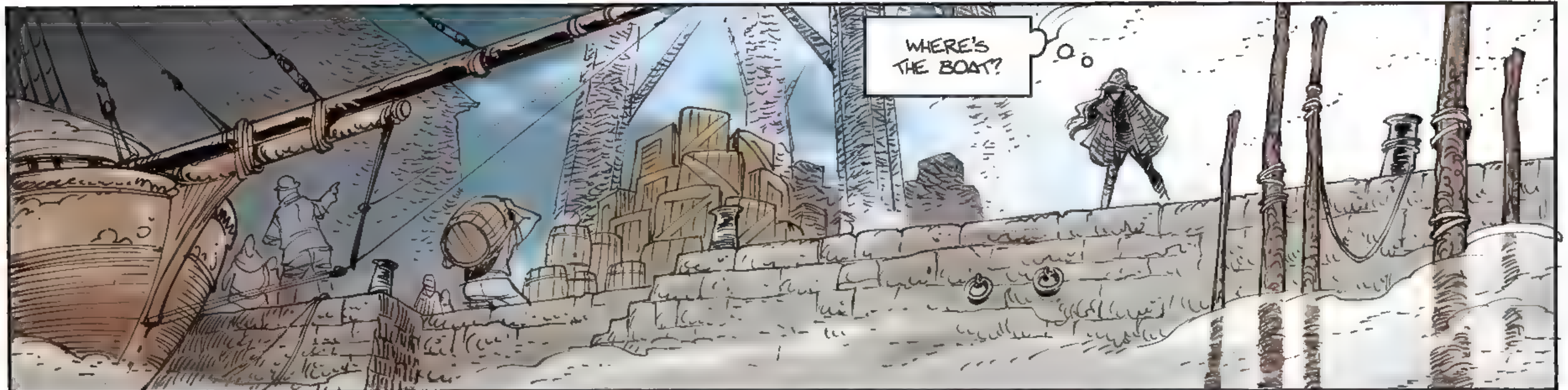
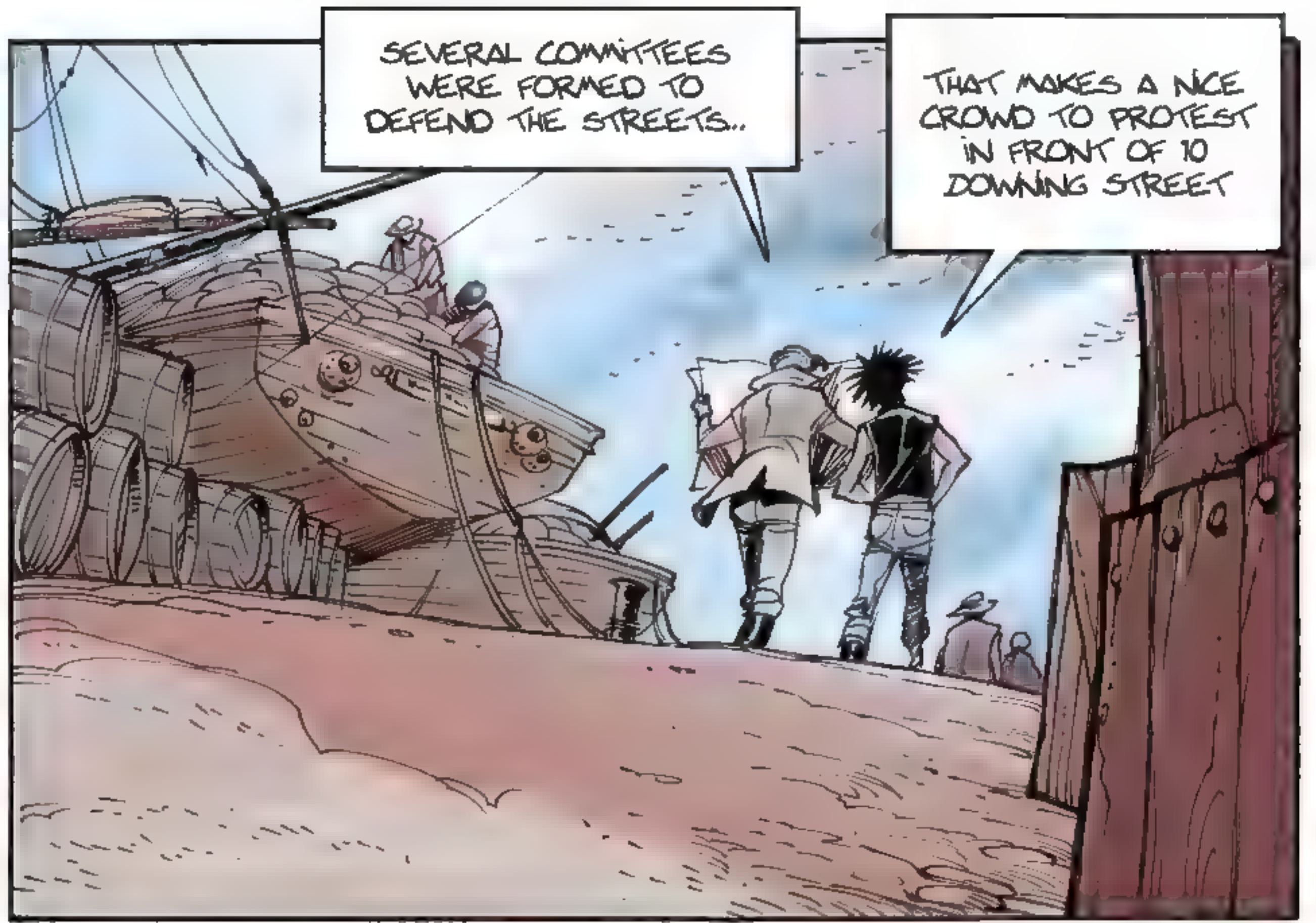
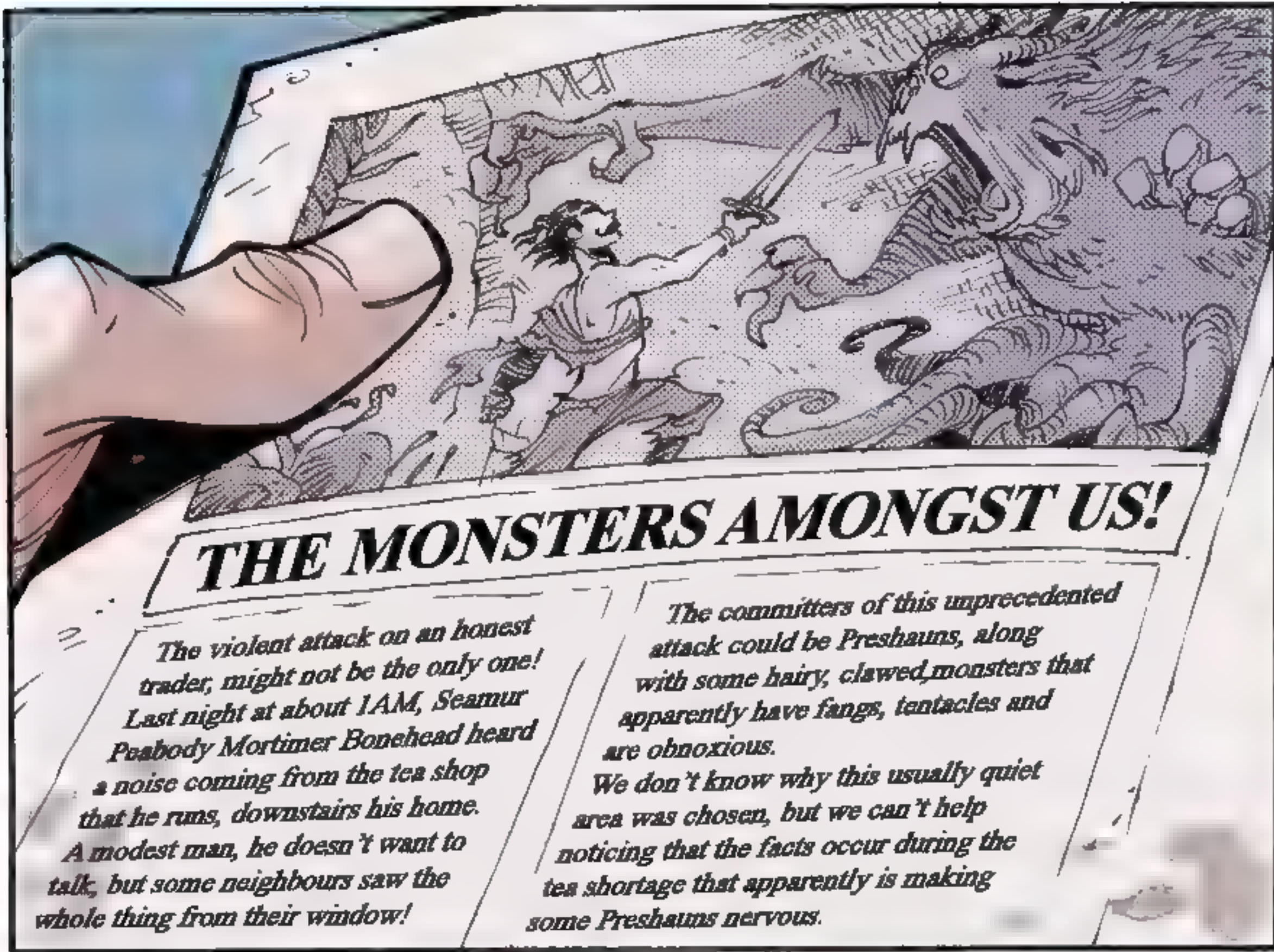




WHAT THE...!









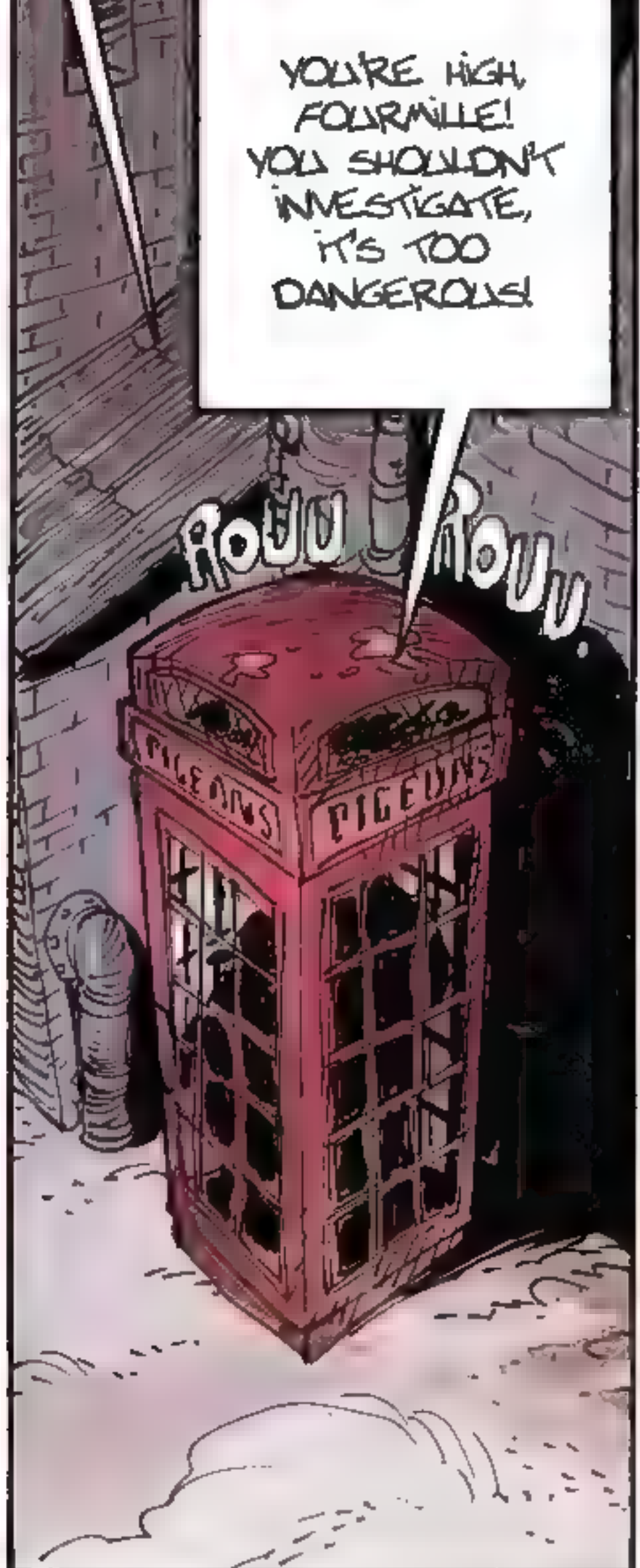
I... NO, WATSON, I AM FOURMILE GRADULE. BUT AT THE SAME TIME I FEEL I'M SHERLOCK. THAT'S WEIRD! IT MAY BE THE LITTLE BLOTTER...

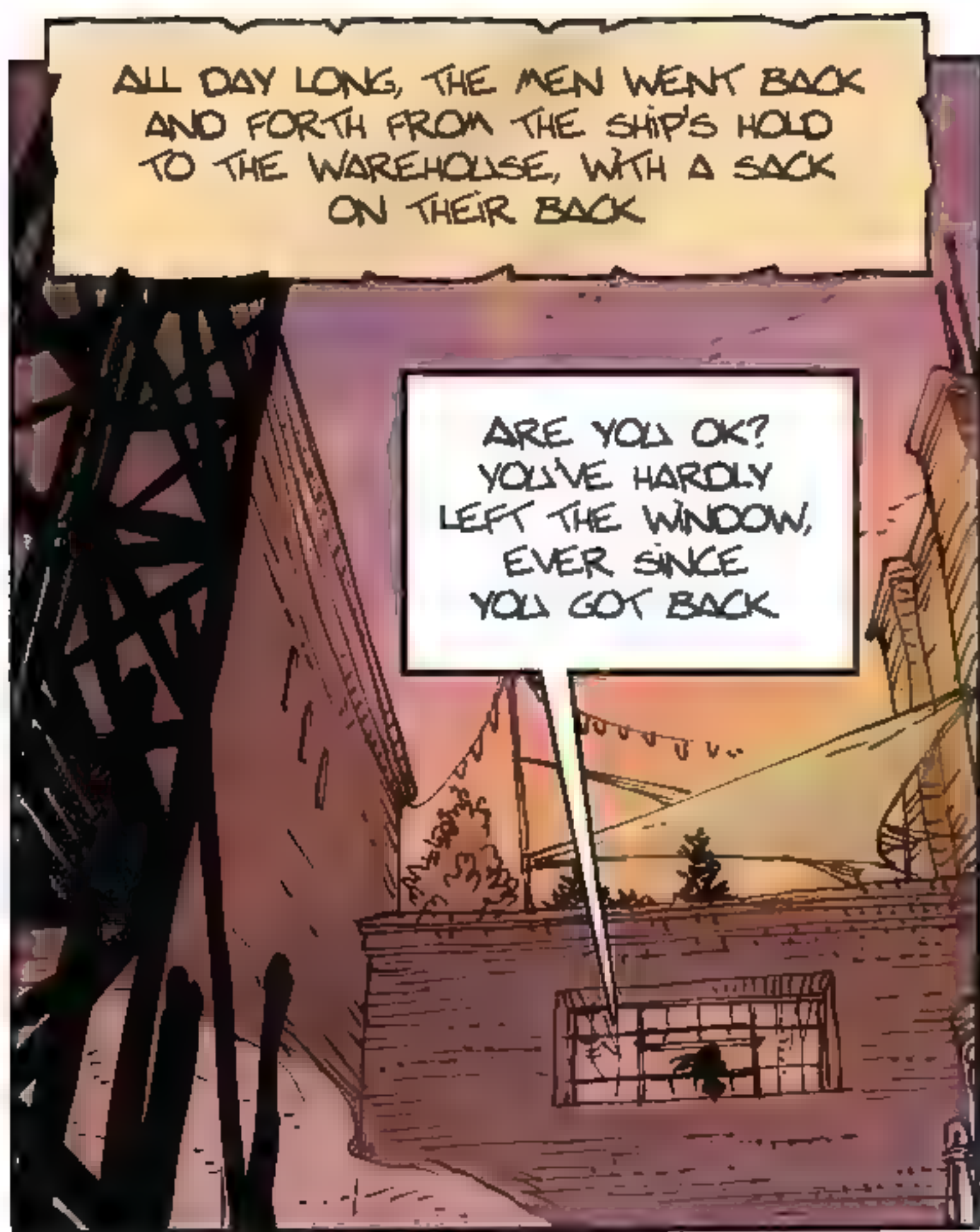
I DIDN'T DO IT ON PURPOSE! I JUST OPENED MY MOUTH...

QUITE THE OPPOSITE, I FEEL SHARPER THAN EVER. WATSON! I WANT TO KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT THE PEARL OF DARJEELING!

THEY ARE TRANSFERRING THE SHIPMENT OF TEA INTO THE WAREHOUSE RIGHT NOW. I'LL BE ON OFFICIAL GUARD DUTY ALONG WITH FOUR POLICEMEN.

SOMEONE WHO KNOWS A THING OR TWO IS INFORMING THE JOURNALISTS.





ALL DAY LONG, THE MEN WENT BACK AND FORTH FROM THE SHIP'S HOLD TO THE WAREHOUSE, WITH A SACK ON THEIR BACK

ARE YOU OK? YOU'VE HARDLY LEFT THE WINDOW, EVER SINCE YOU GOT BACK



JUST LEAVE HER ALONE! YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT WHEN TRIPPING WE SEE BEYOND WHAT WE LOOK AT...



I KNEW THE SOLUTION WAS JUST UNDER MY NOSE AND I JUST FAILED TO SEE IT.



THIS IS THE LAST ONE!



ALL THIS MADE ME THIRSTY!

SAME HERE, BUT IT'S NOT TEA THAT I NEED!

AH
AH
AH



THE UNLOADING IS COMPLETED.

POSITIONS, EVERYBODY!



SURROUND THE BUILDING!



HOW LONG IS THE TEA STAYING AT THE DOCKS?

HARDLY MORE THAN FORTY EIGHT HOURS.

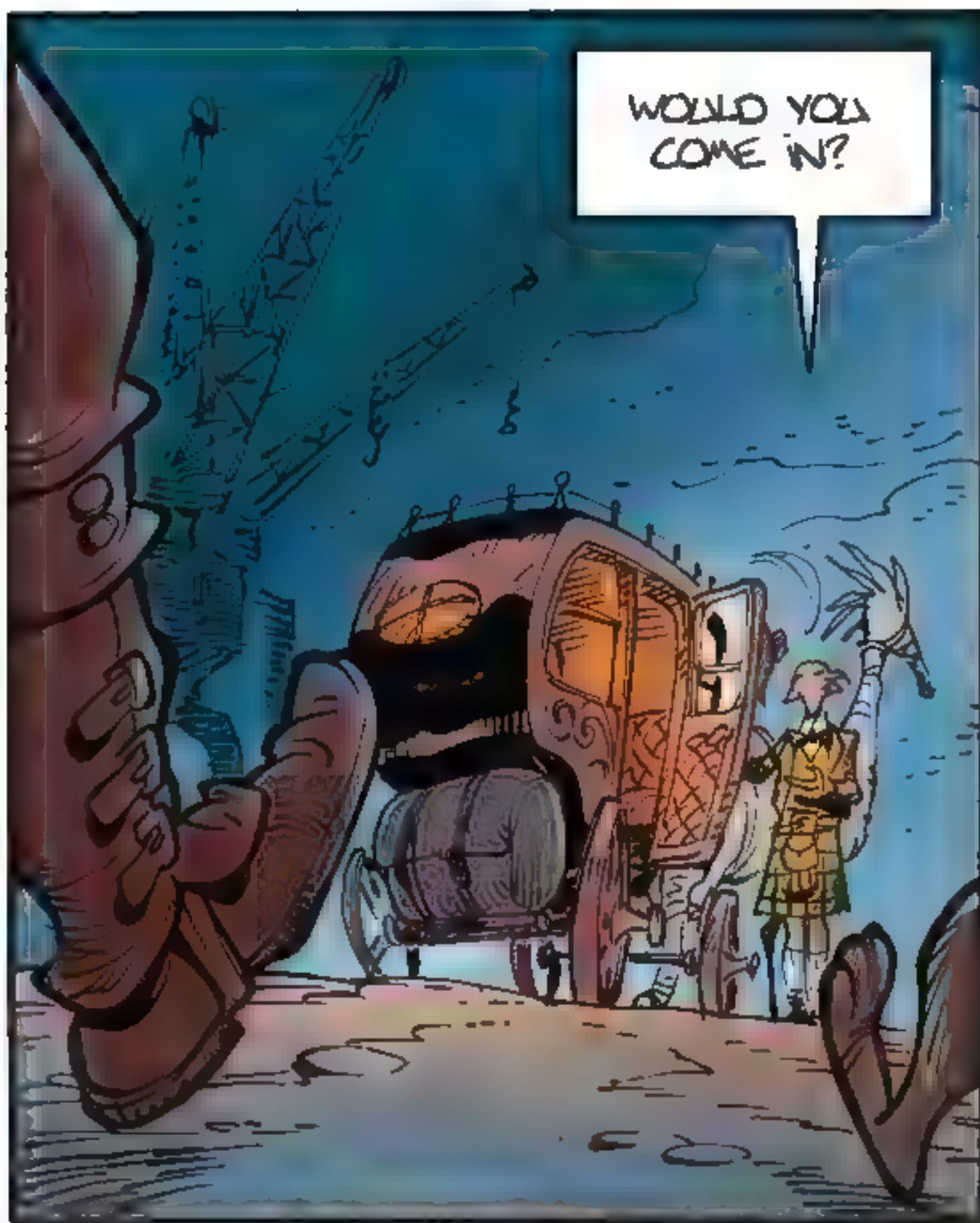


WE NOTIFIED OUR RETAILERS ABOUT THE ARRIVAL OF THE SHIP, ALSO SOME TRUCKS WILL BE HERE AT DAWN.



IT'S GETTING DARK...

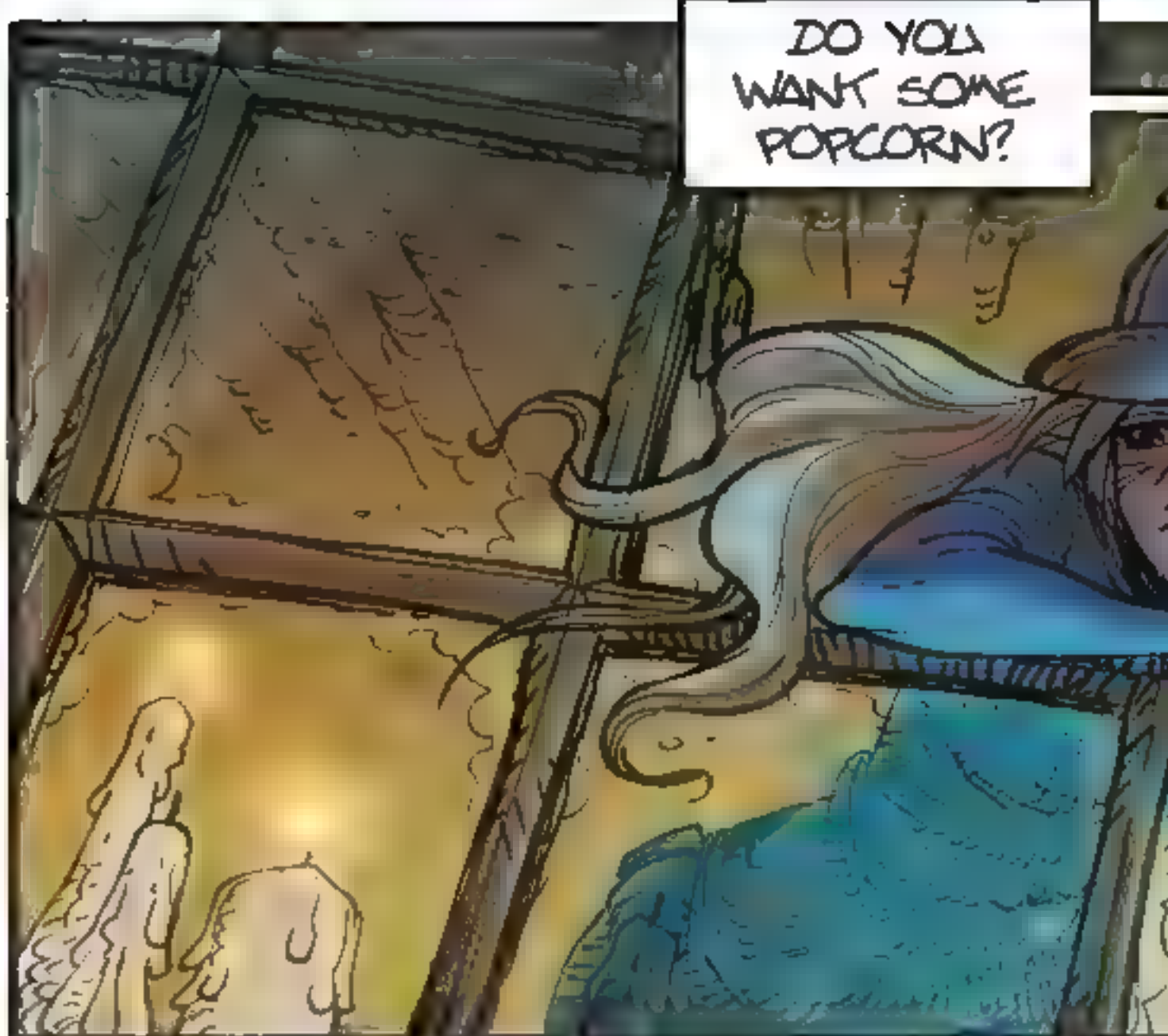
OF COURSE, WE ARE IN ENGLAND AND IT'S ALREADY FOUR PM!



WOULD YOU
COME IN?



ANGALL AND LYDON
WEREN'T BACK YET.
I DIDN'T EVEN SEE
THEM LEAVING
THE WAREHOUSE...



DO YOU
WANT SOME
POPCORN?

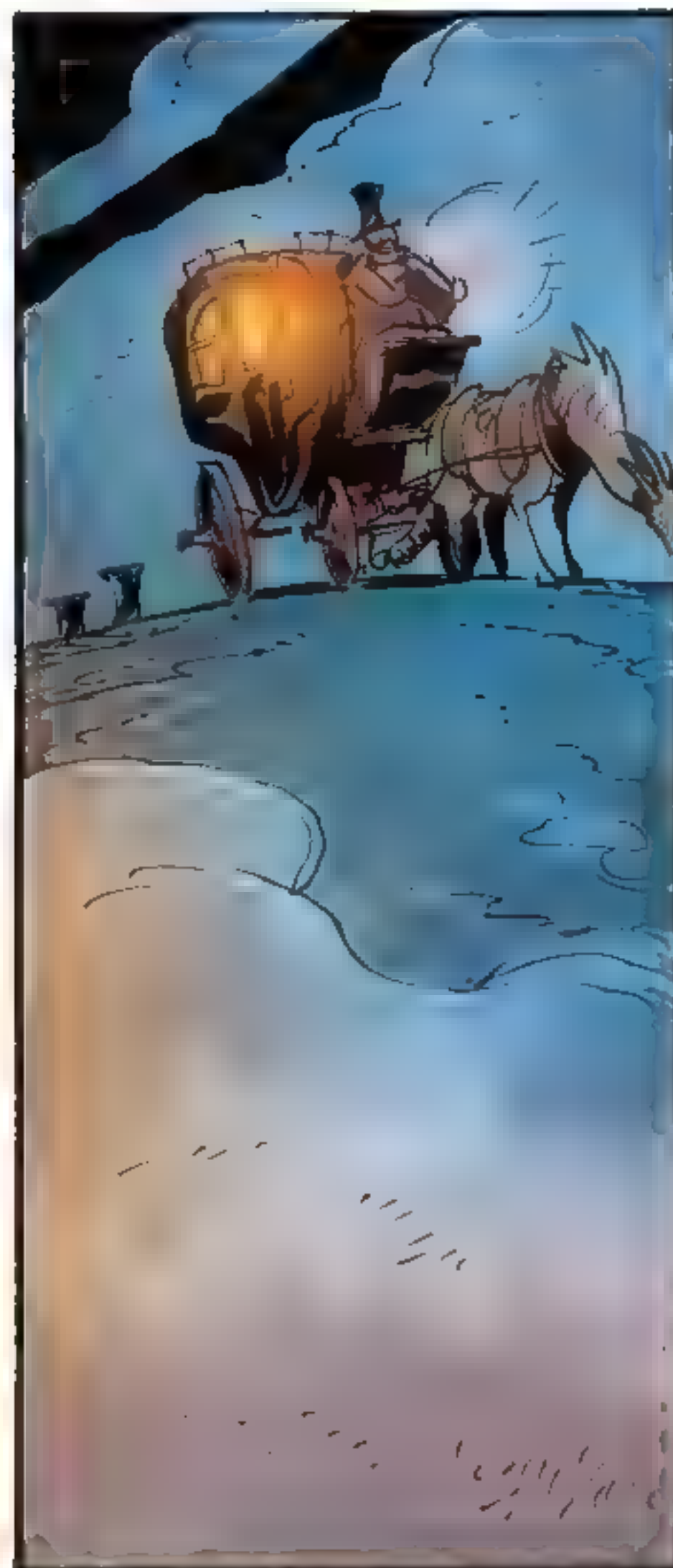
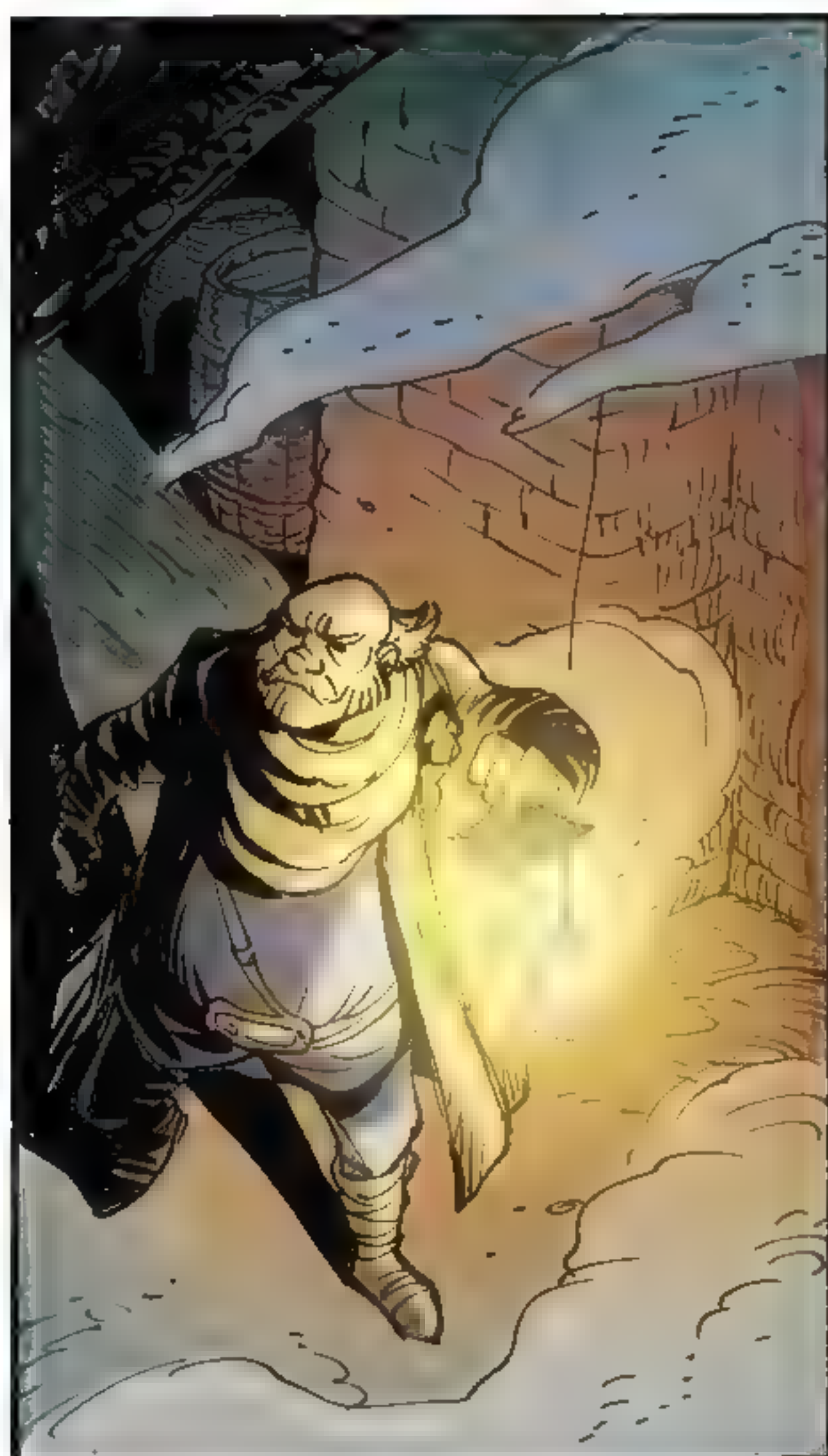


THAT'S WHAT YOU HAVE
WHEN YOU WATCH A
SHOW, LIKE YOU'RE
DOING NOW.



IT'S
TASTELESS.

OF COURSE, IT'S JUST POP CORN.
ANGALL ALWAYS BRINGS HOME
THE SALTY KIND, BUT I PREFER IT SWEET.



STILL
NOTHING.

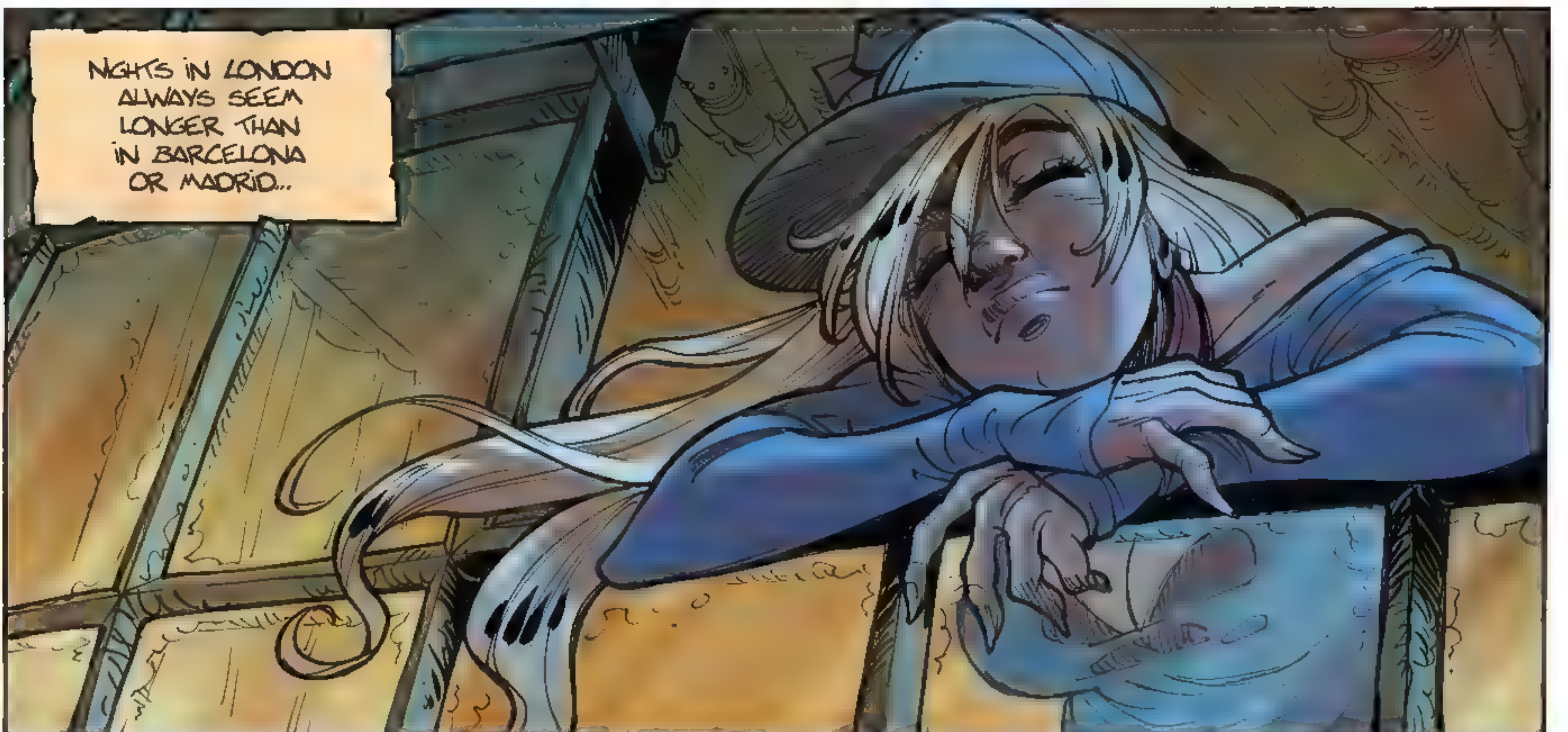
PERFECT.



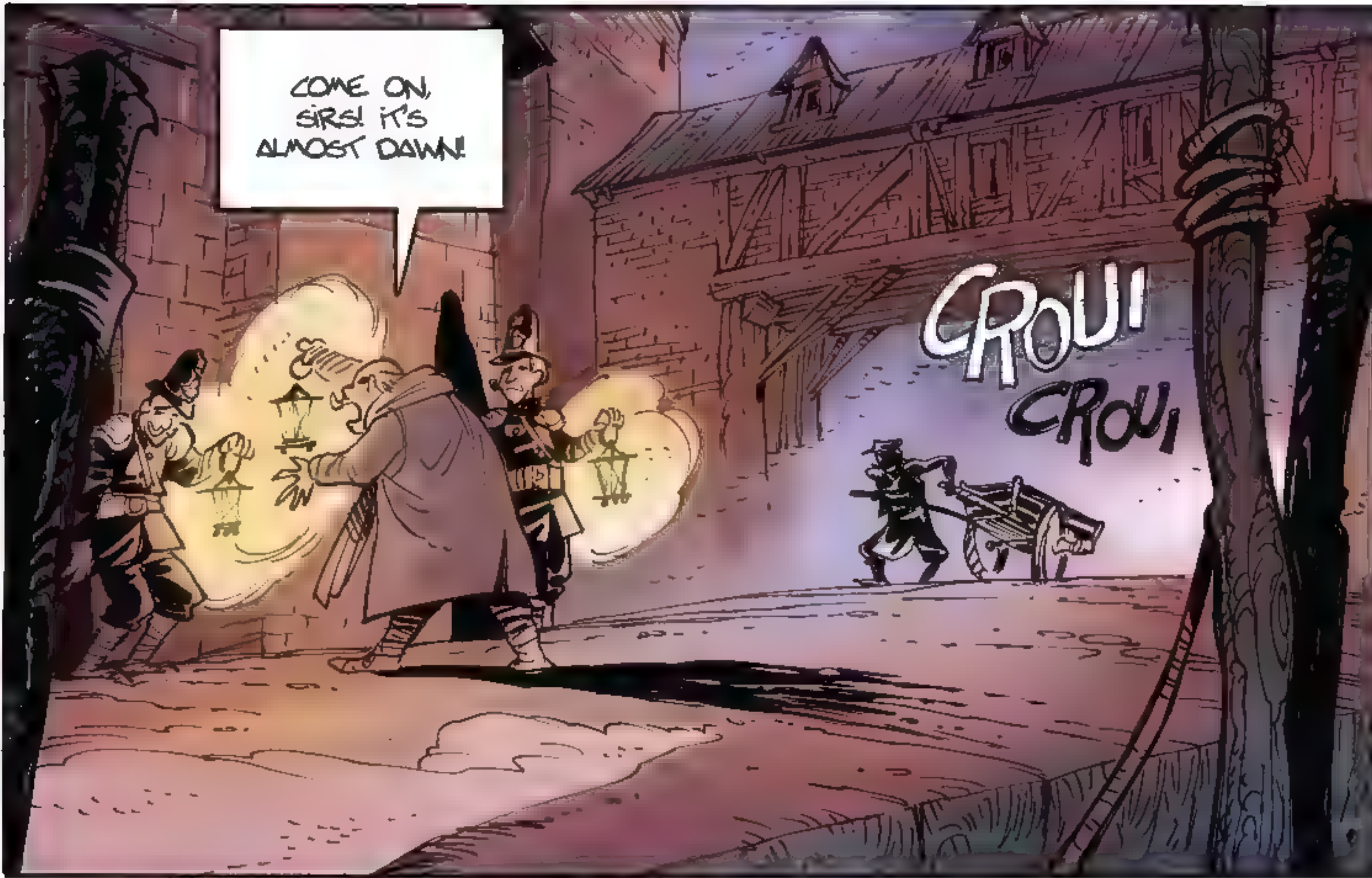
EVERYTHING
ALL RIGHT?

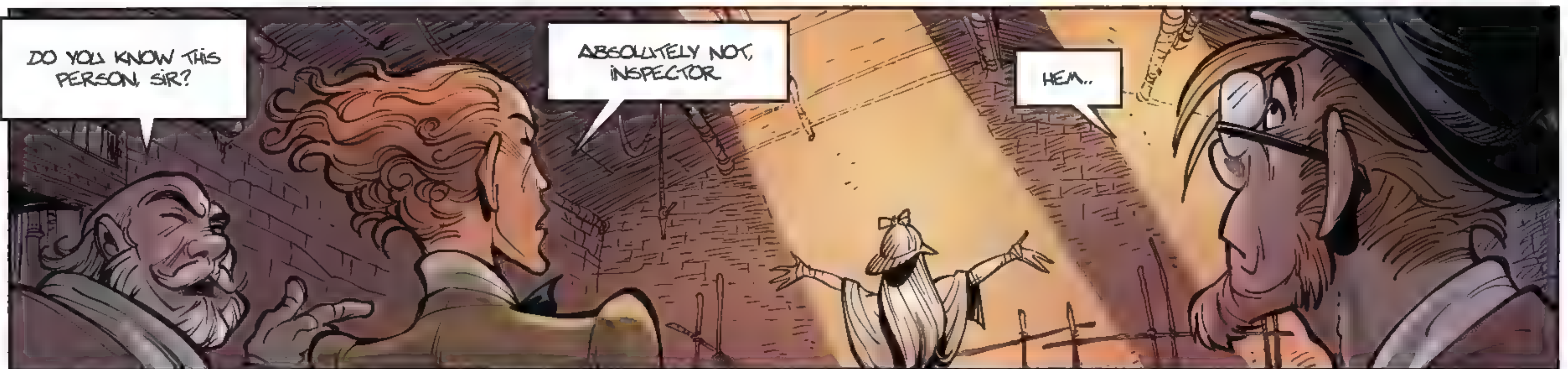
BOM
BOM

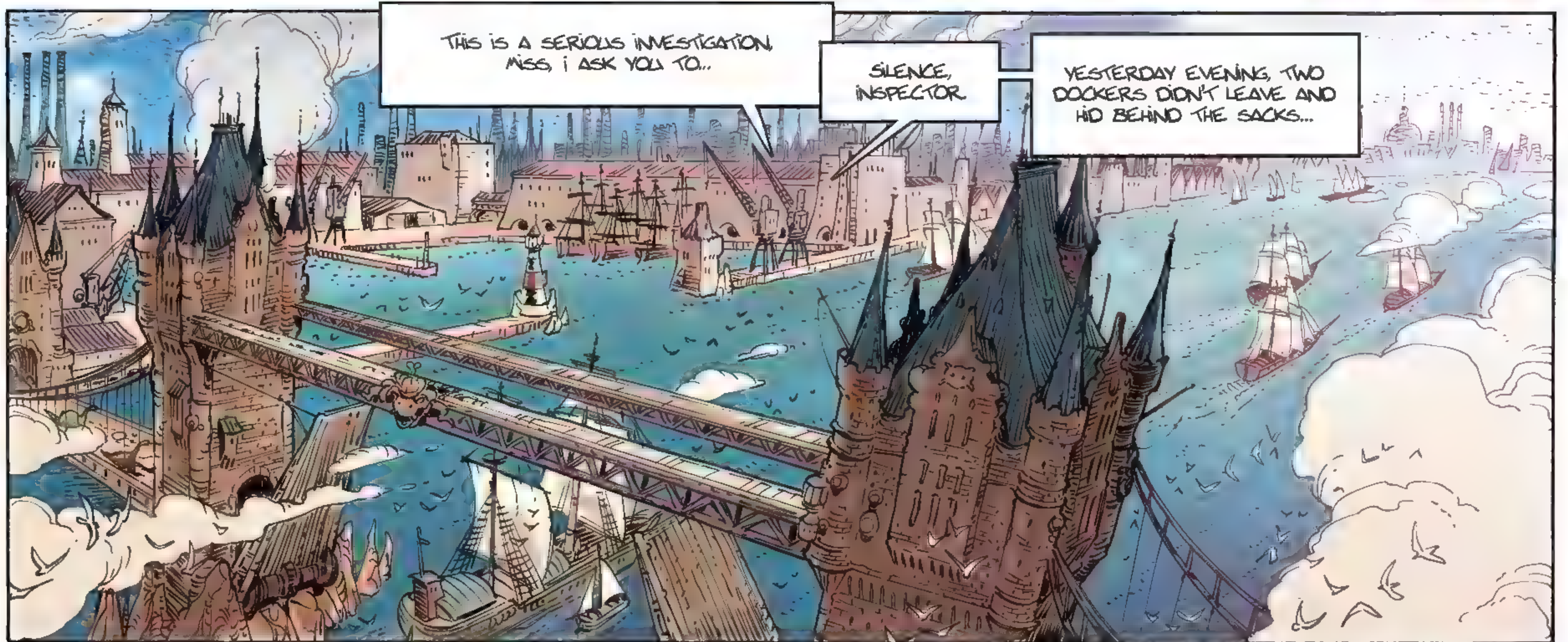
YEP!



NIGHTS IN LONDON
ALWAYS SEEM
LONGER THAN
IN BARCELONA
OR MADRID...

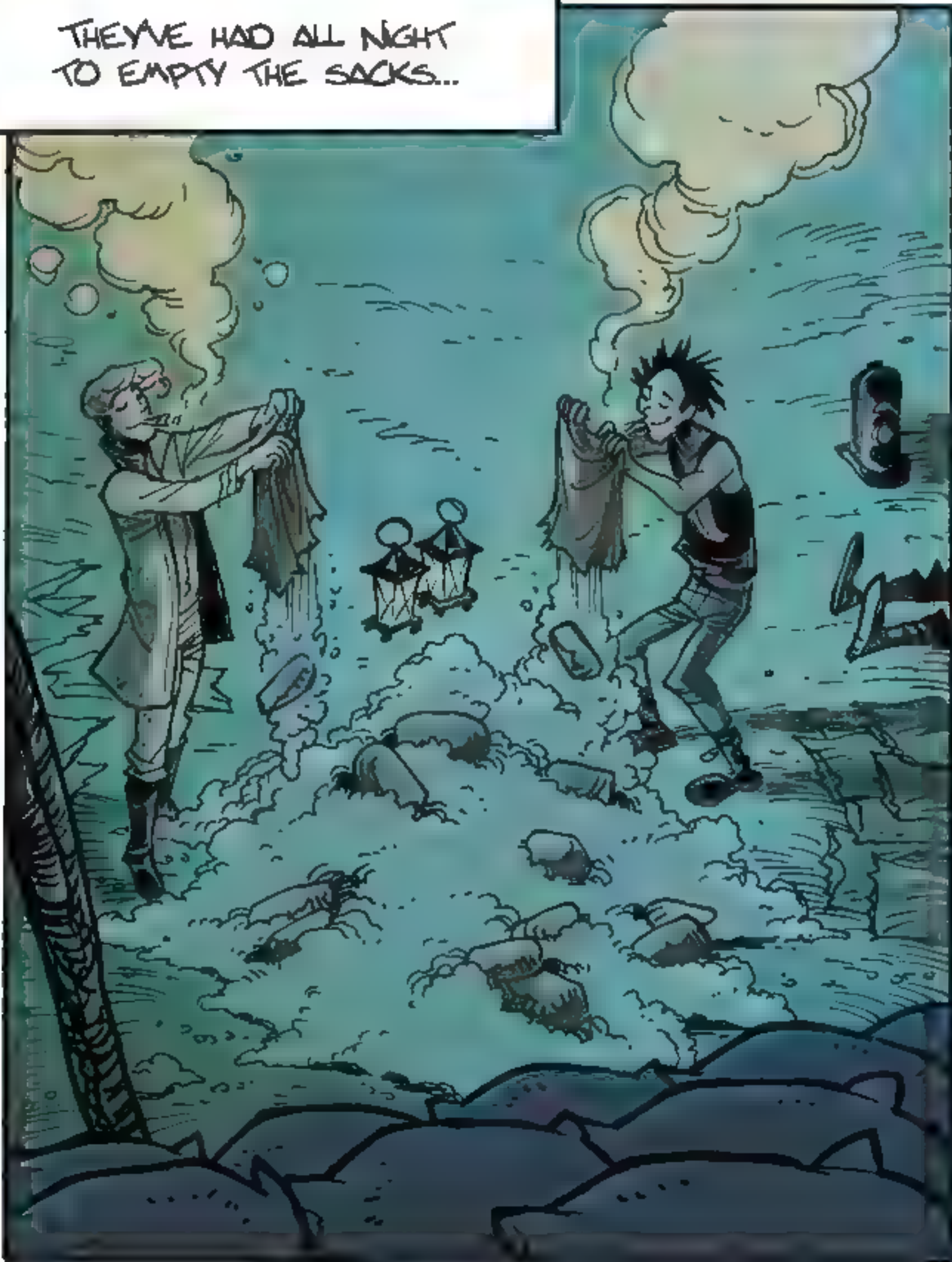








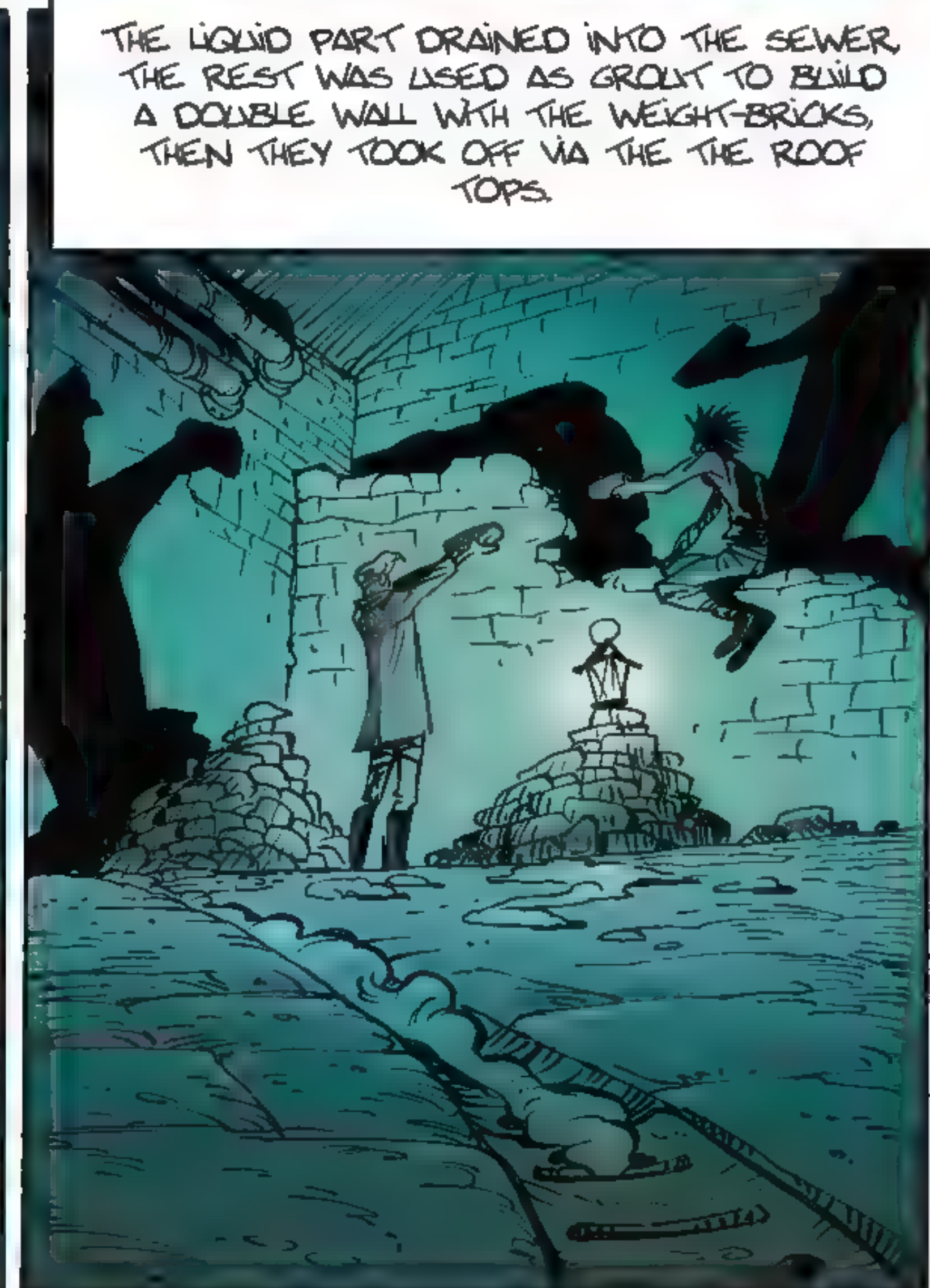
THEY'VE HAD ALL NIGHT
TO EMPTY THE SACKS...



THEN ALL THEY HAD TO DO WAS
JUST SOAK THE POPCORN UNTIL IT
WAS REDUCED TO A SOFT MOUND.
A VERY GOOD IDEA: THE CARGO
HAD DISAPPEARED.



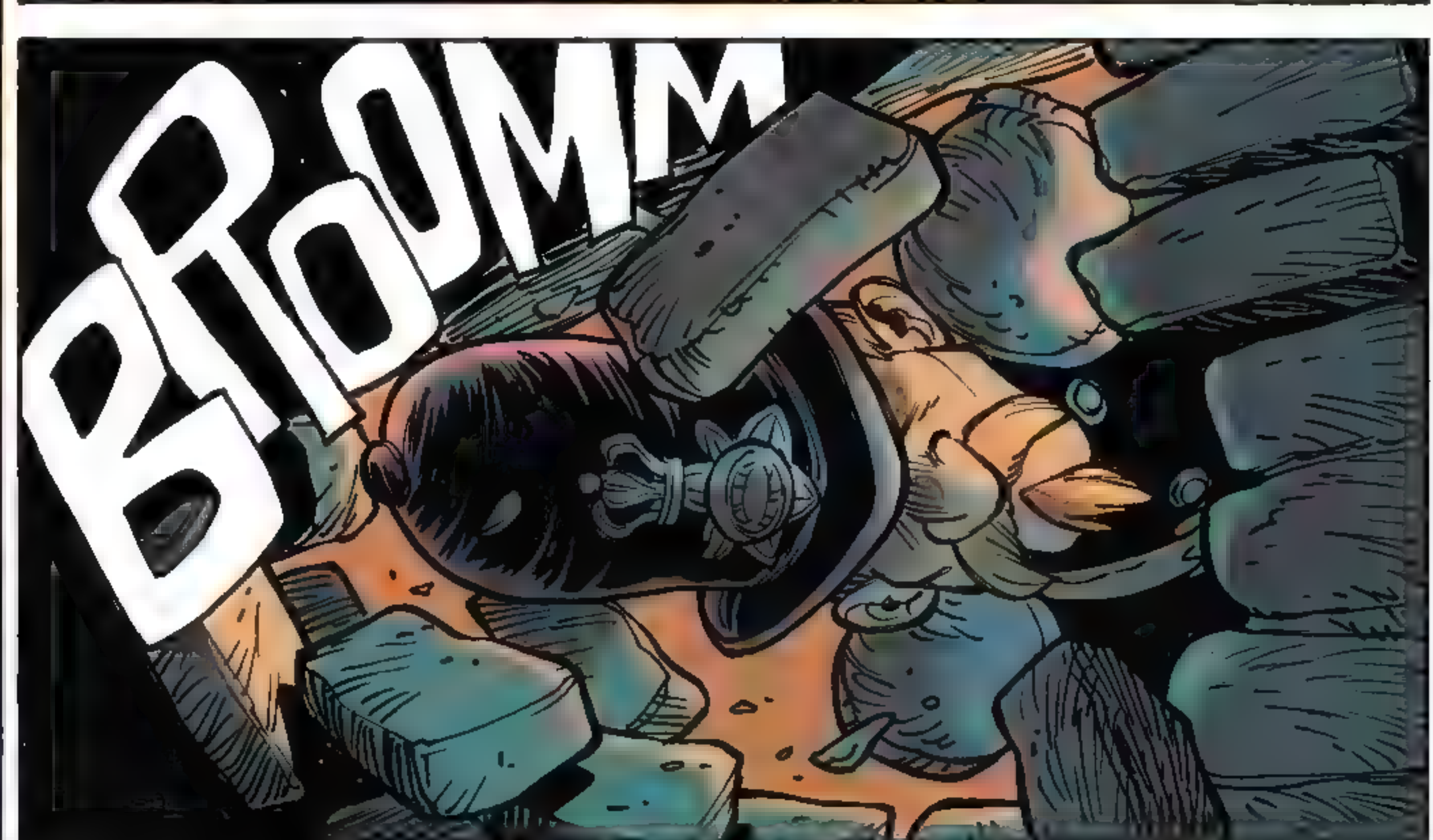
THE LIQUID PART DRAINED INTO THE SEWER.
THE REST WAS USED AS GROUT TO BUILD
A DOUBLE WALL WITH THE WEIGHT-BLOCKS.
THEN THEY TOOK OFF VIA THE ROOF
TOPS.

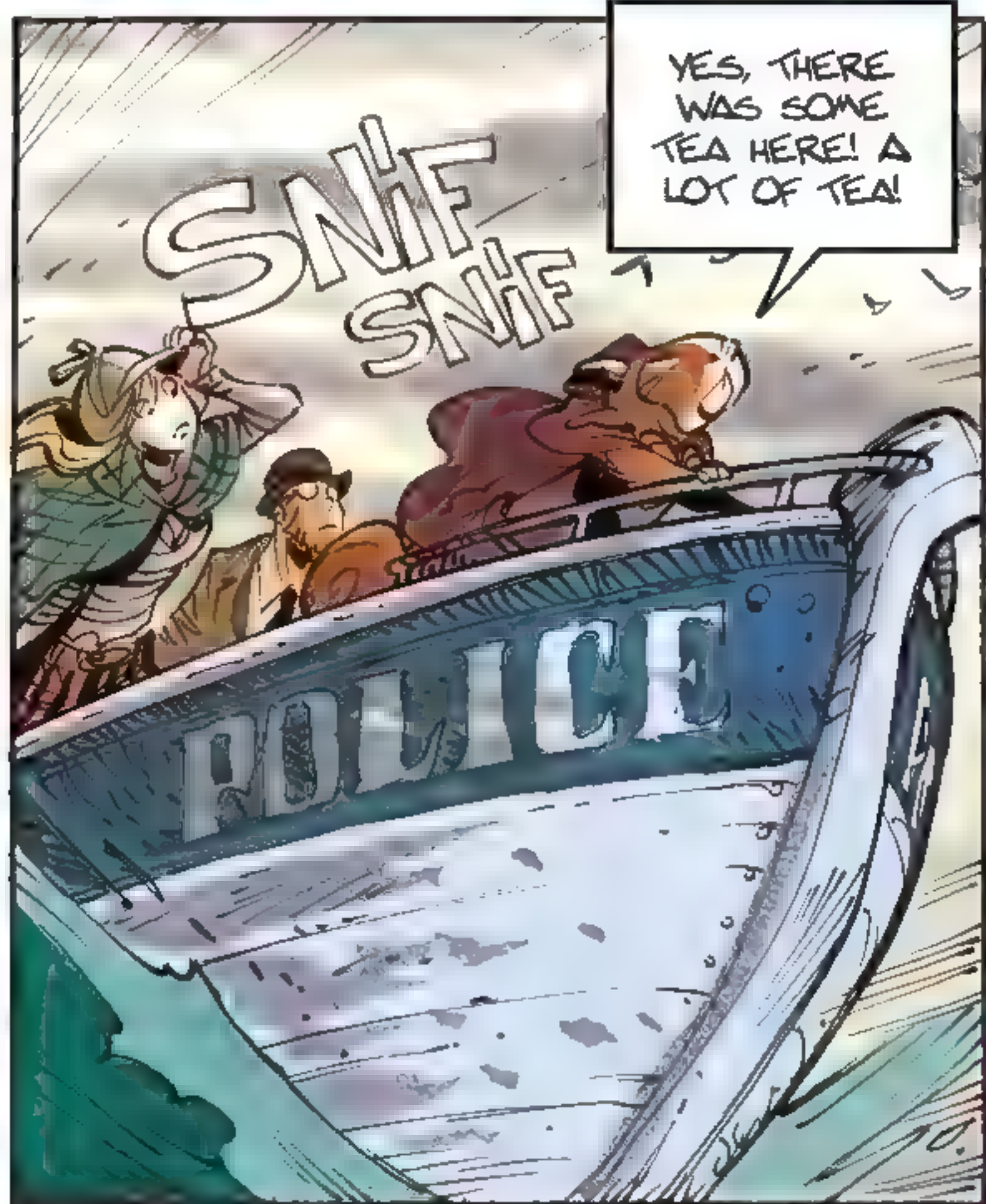
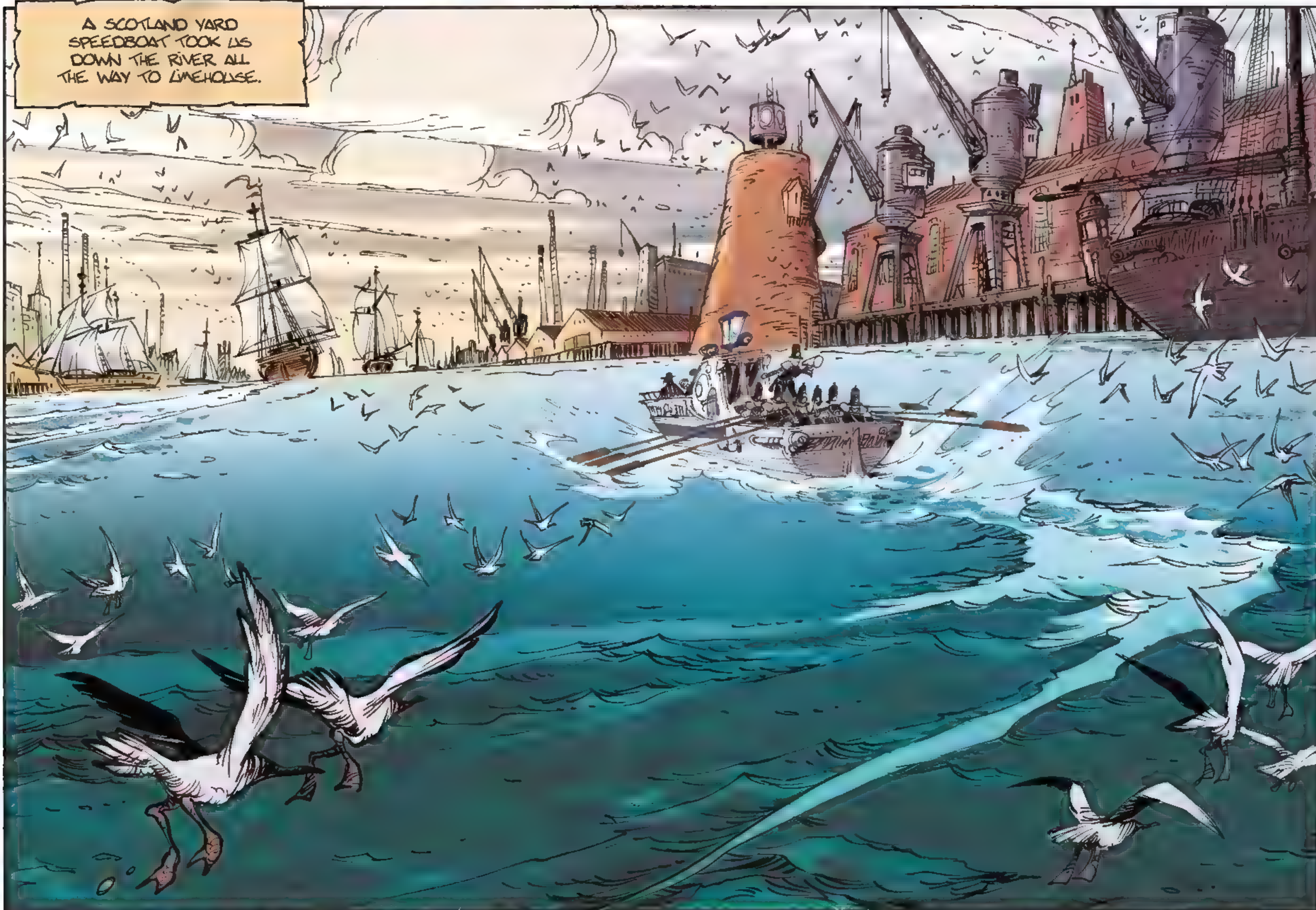
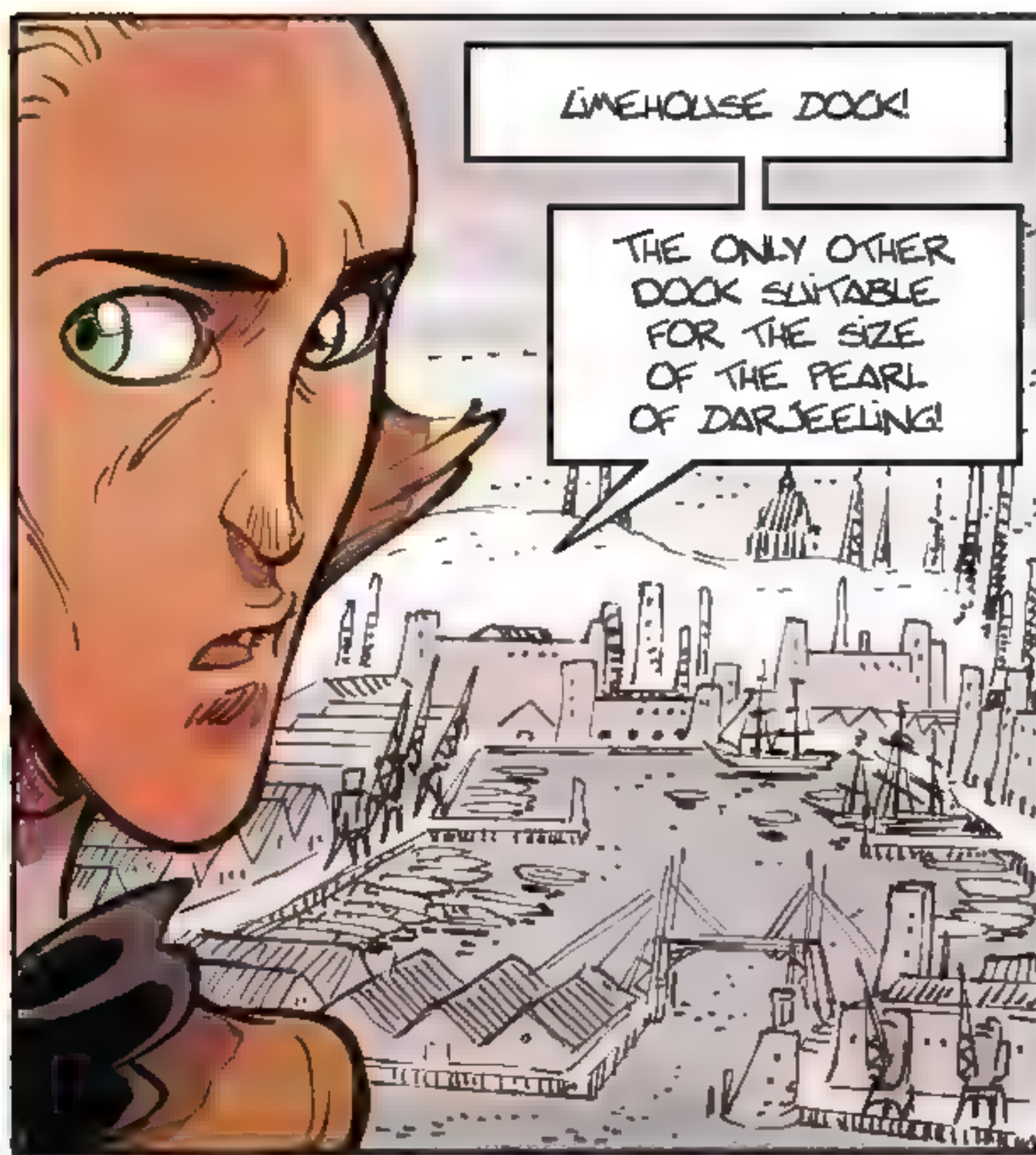


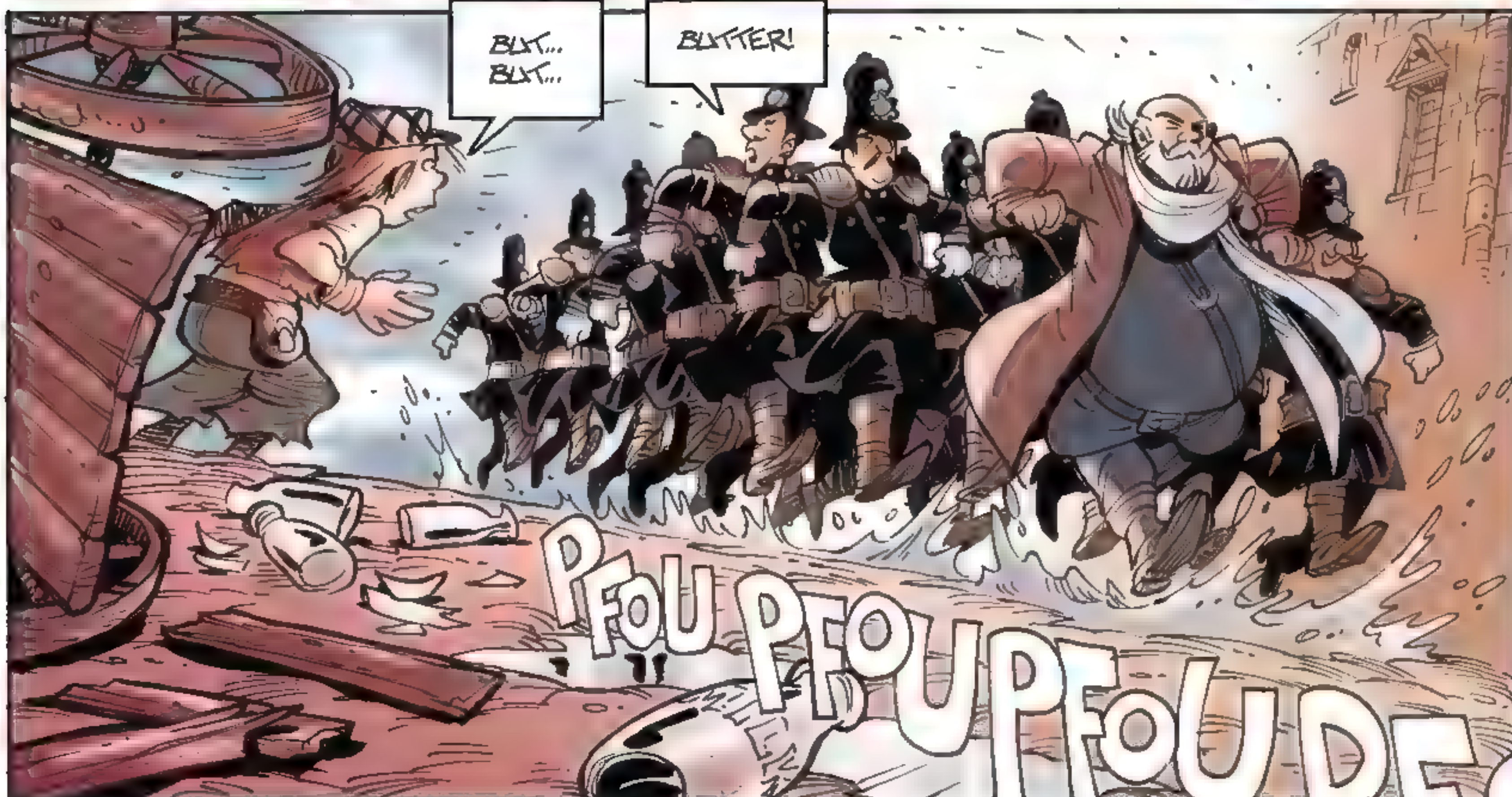
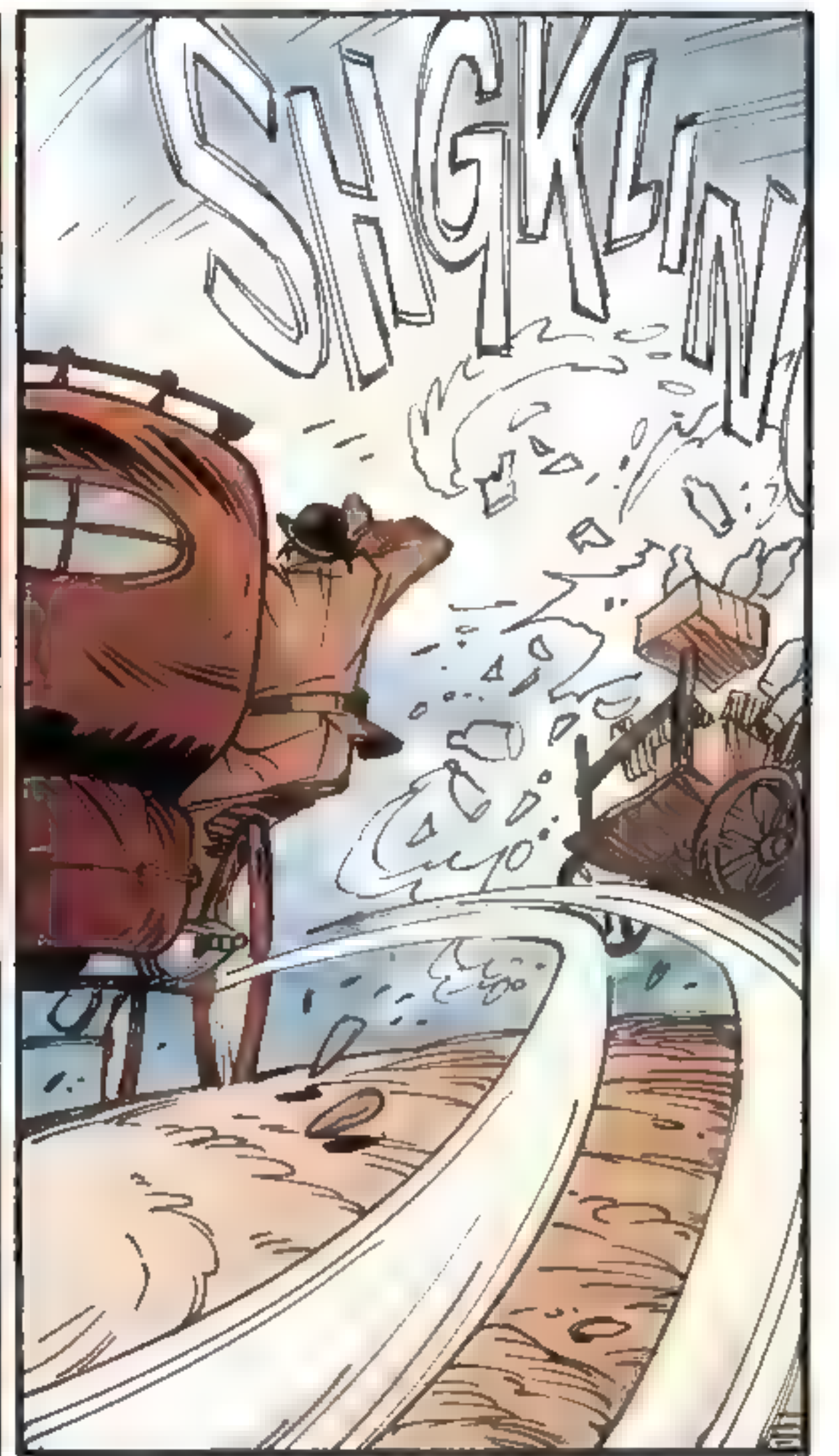
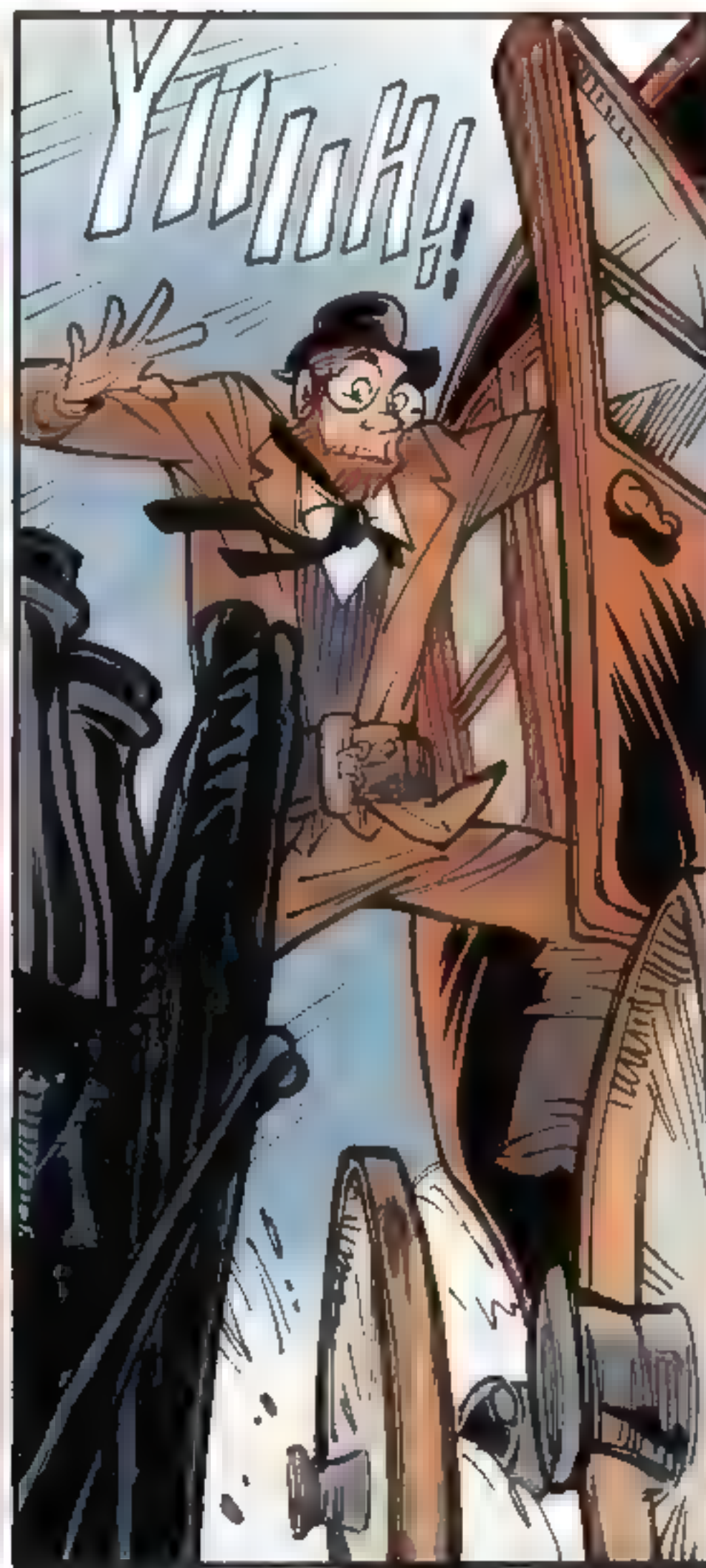
SMASH THIS DOWN
YOU'LL FIND
THE EMPTY
SACKS BEHIND IT.



ONE... TWO...









HE'S ENTERING
WHITECHAPEL!

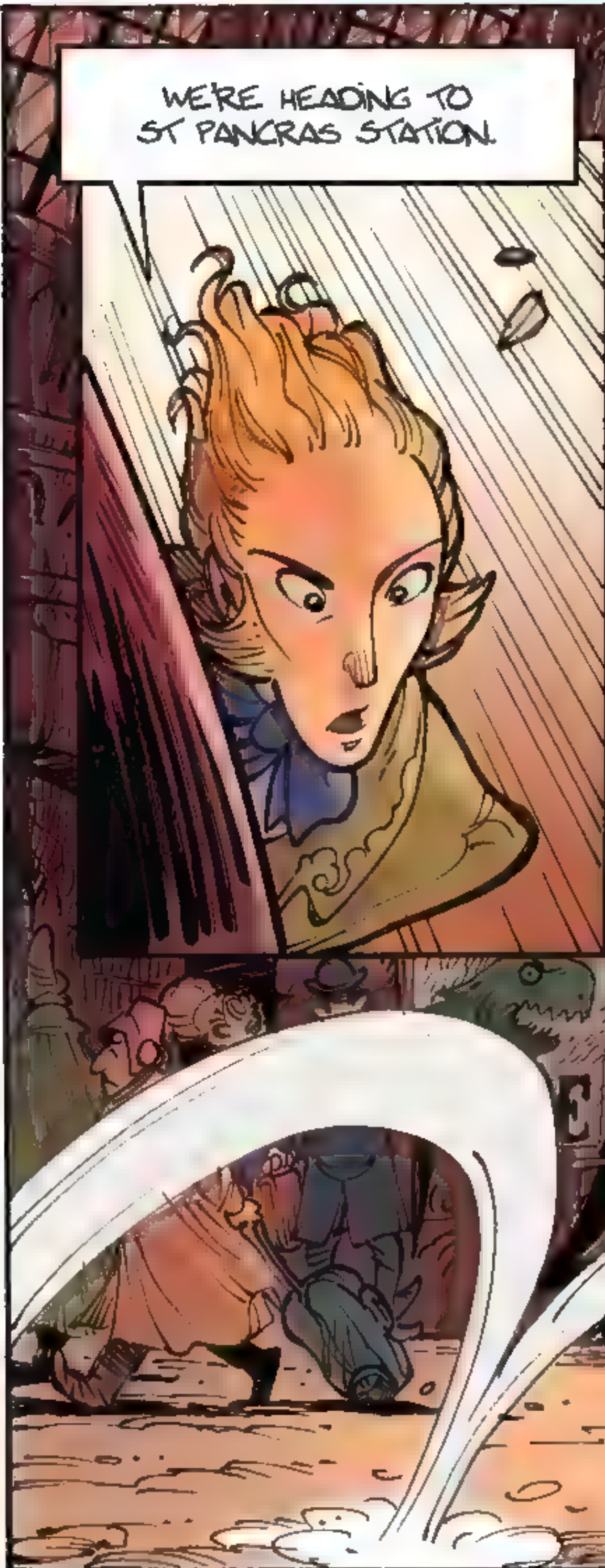


WHITECHAPEL!

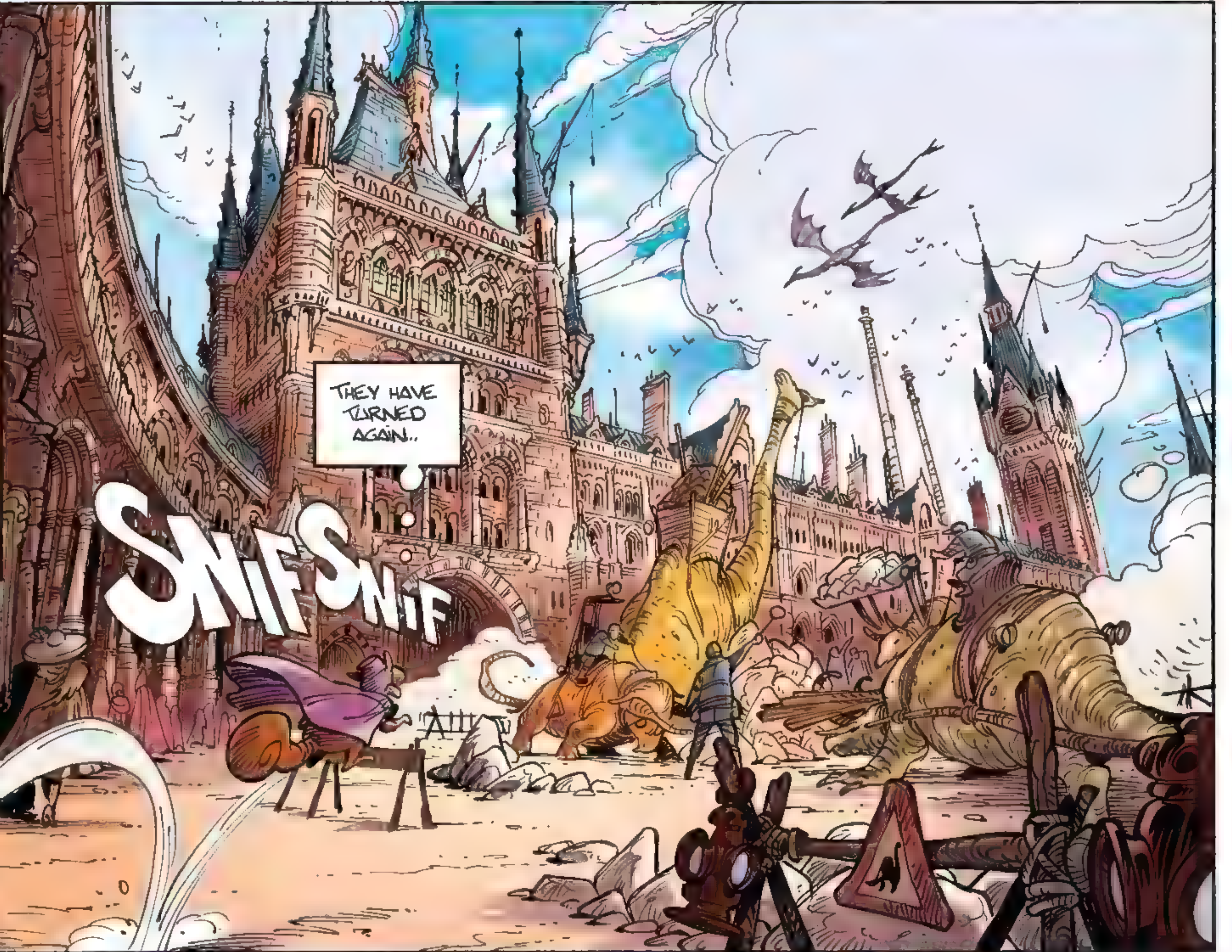
I COULD SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY
TO SOLVE THE JACK THE RIPPER
CASE, WHILE I'M AT IT...



I THINK WE'RE GOING
TOO FAST TO DO
THAT.



WE'RE HEADING TO
ST PANCRAS STATION.



THEY HAVE
TURNED
AGAIN...

SNIF SNIF



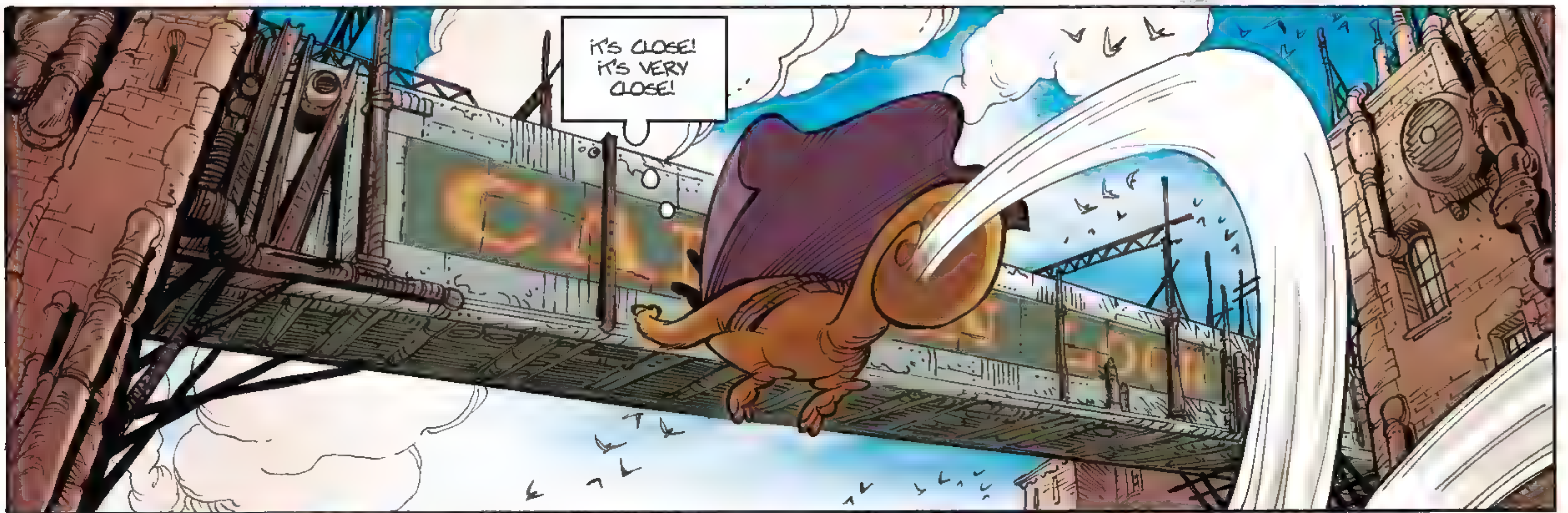
WHAT ARE
THEY DOING?

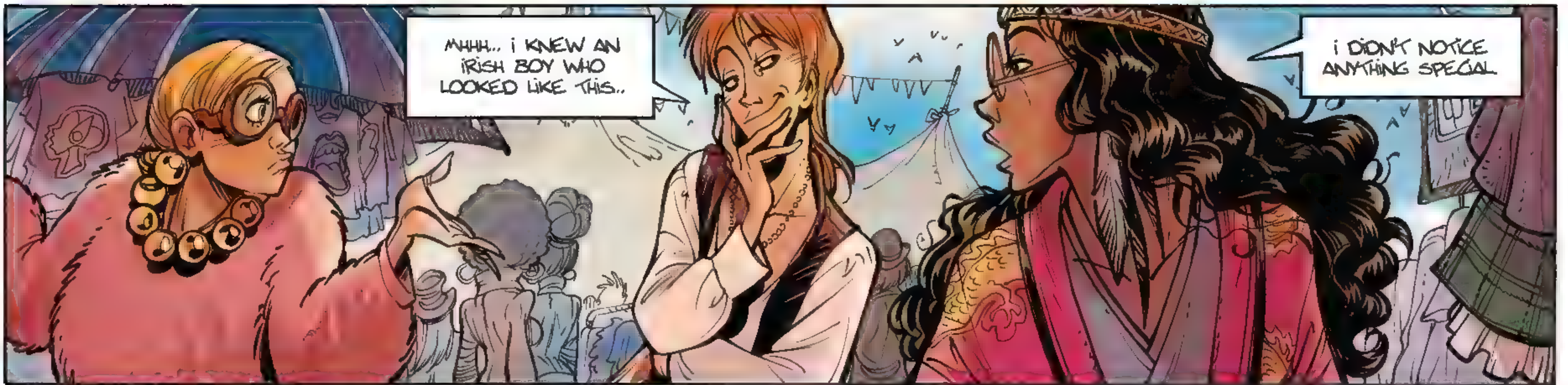
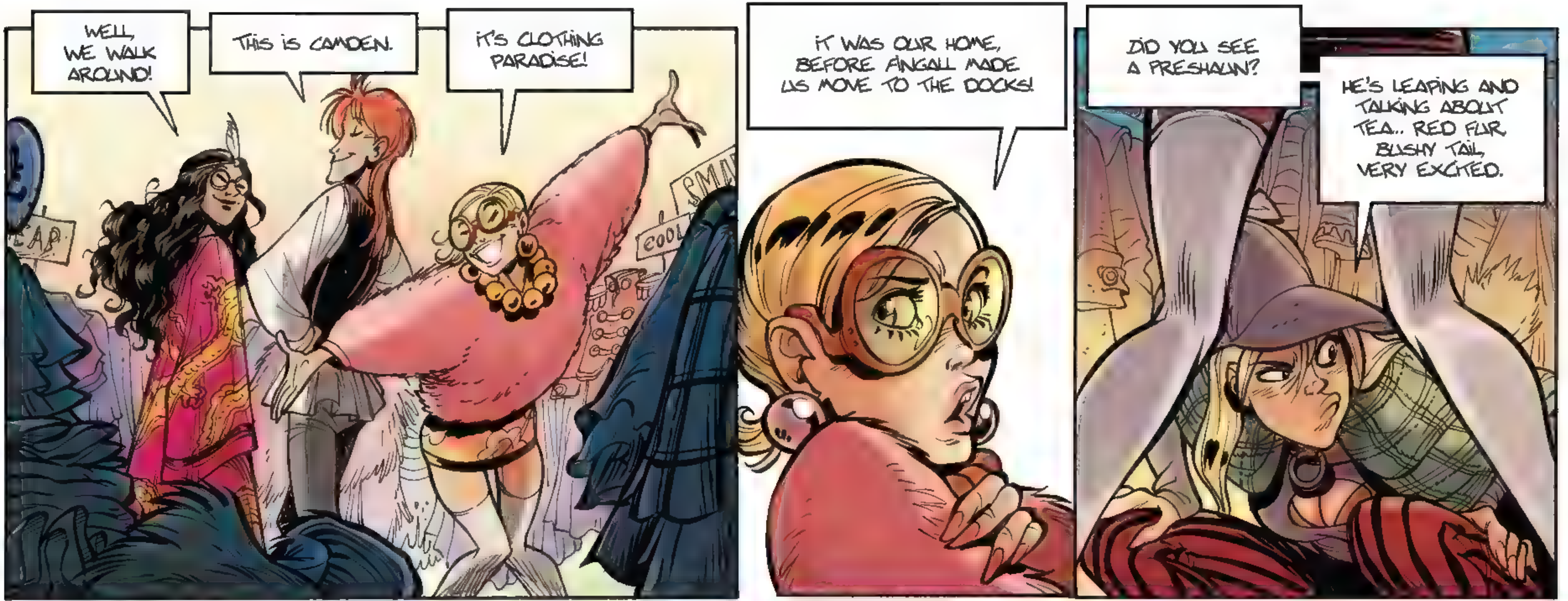
THEY'RE DIGGING
A TUNNEL ALL
THE WAY TO PARIS
FOR THE TRAINS.

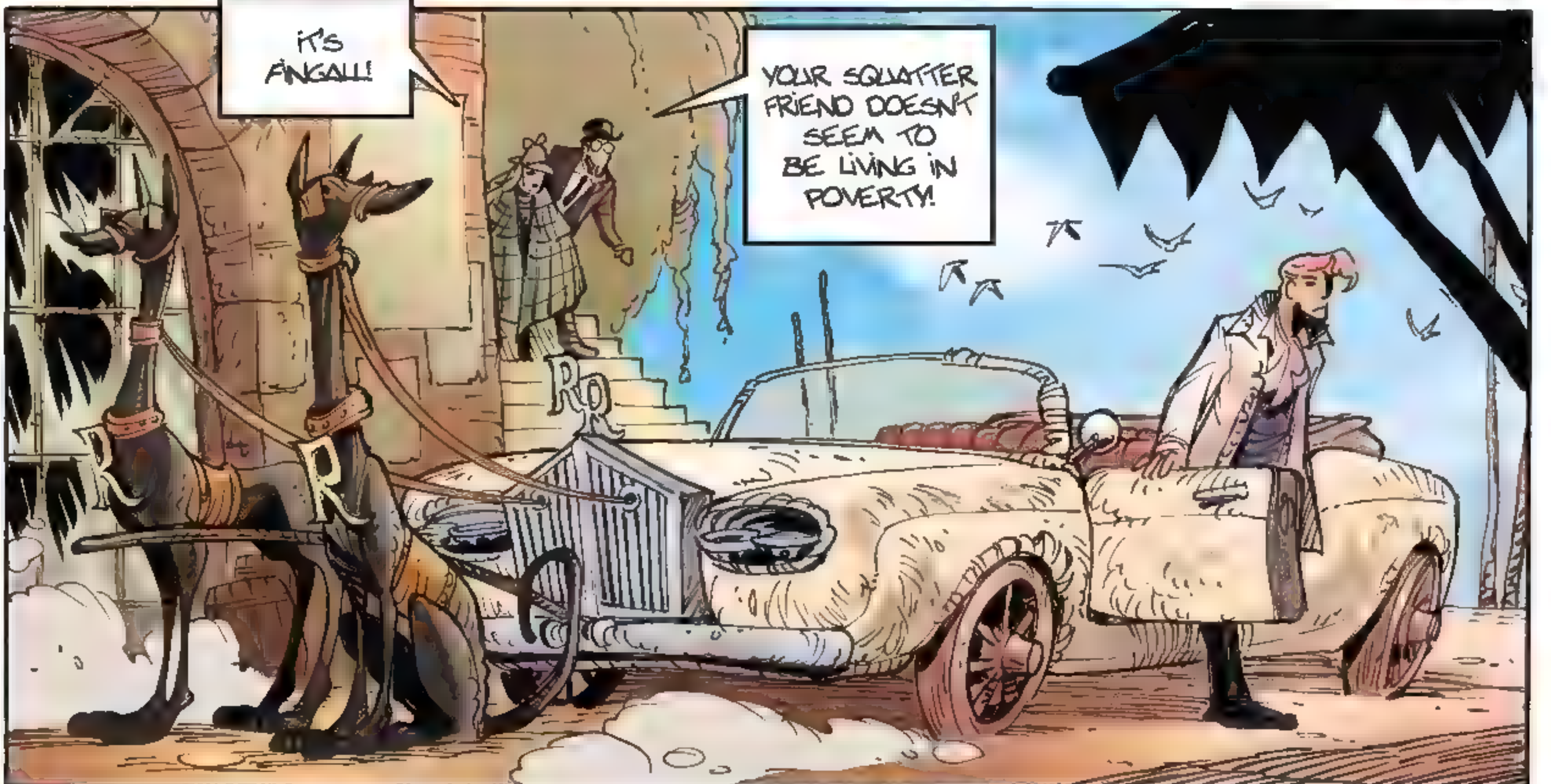
I WOULD HAVE DONE IT JUST
UNDER THE SEA, BUT THEY WANT
TO MONETIZE THEIR MOLES.

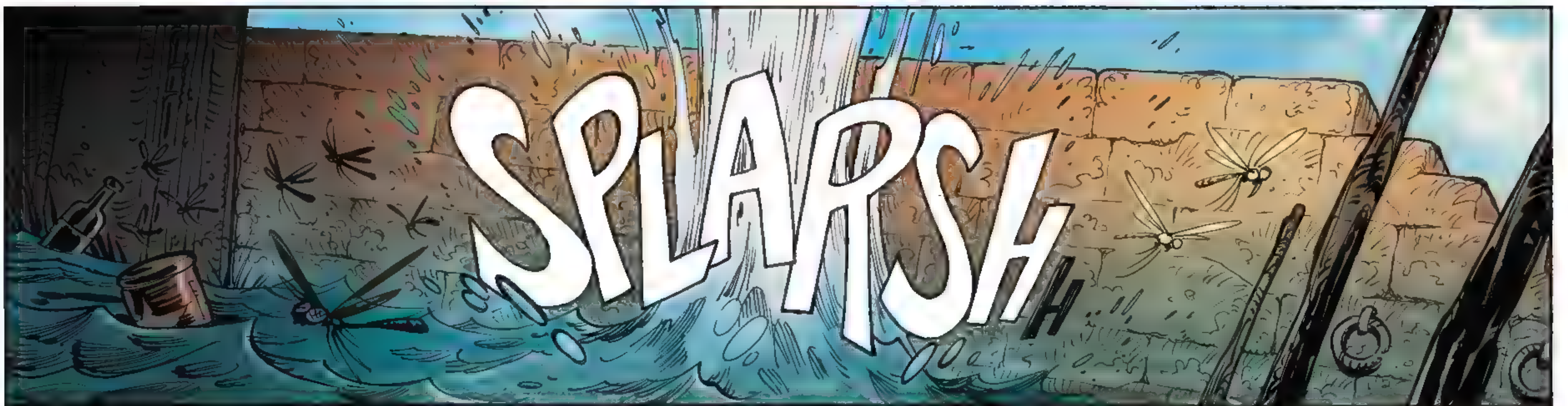
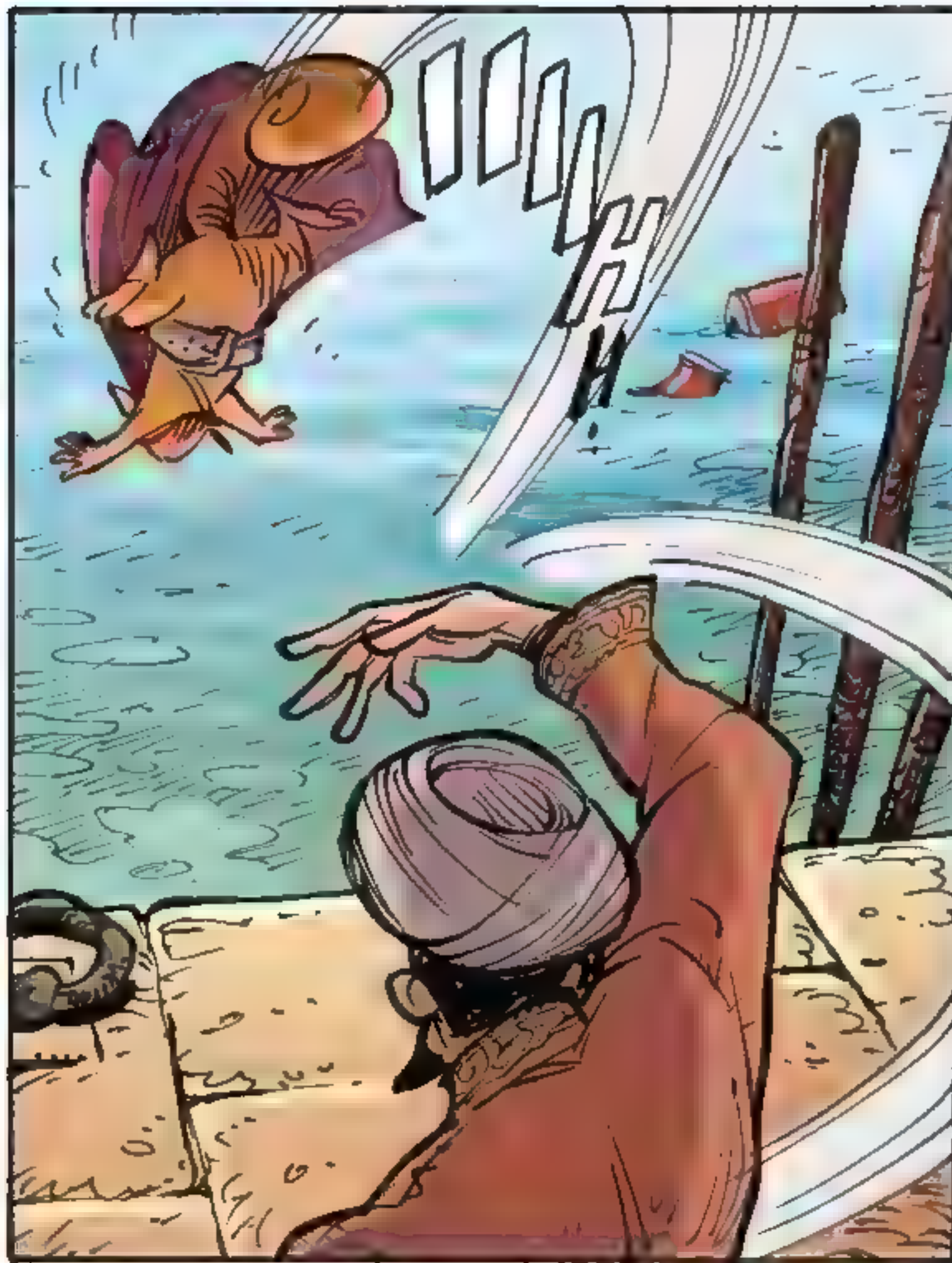


GOODNESS
GRACIOUS!







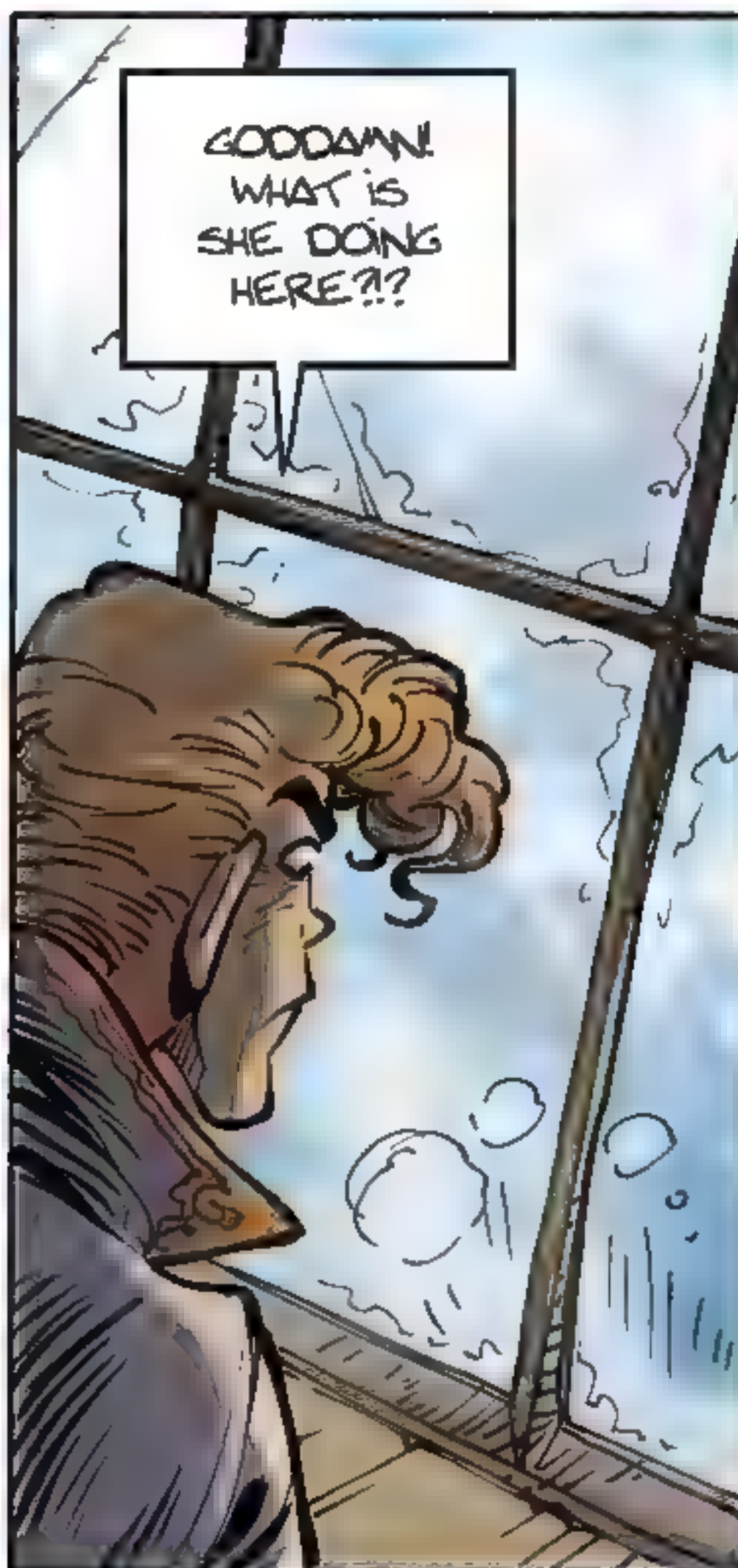




WE MUST WIPE EVERY LAST ONE
OUT! THERE WAS EVEN ONE OF
THEM SNEAKING AROUND
DOWNSTAIRS, WHEN I GOT HERE.



BE QUIET!
SUSBERT!
YOU'LL GIVE
US AWAY!

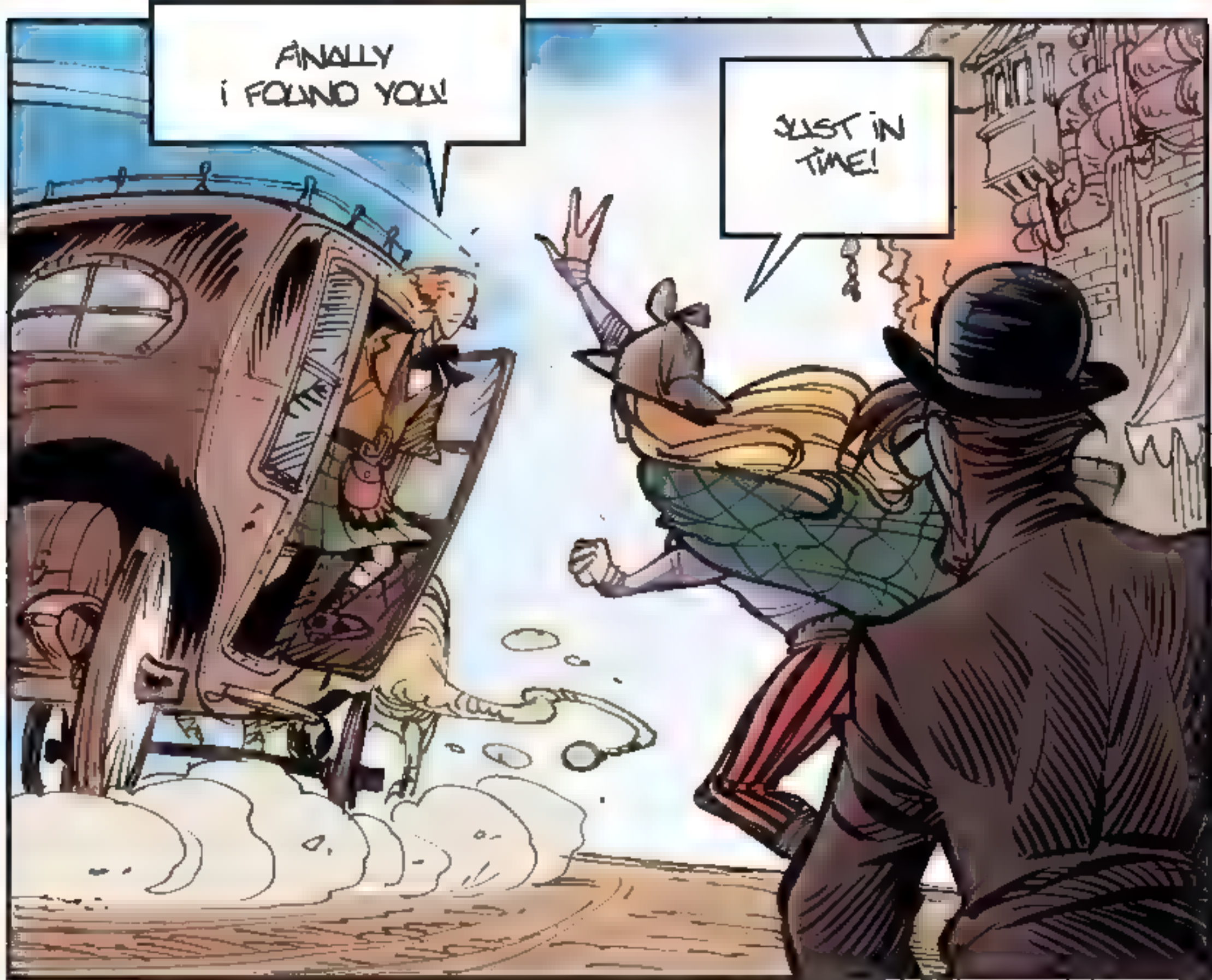


GODDAMN!
WHAT IS
SHE DOING
HERE??



WHO?

A GIRL FROM
THE SQUAT,
A NEW ONE.



FINALLY
I FOUND YOU!

JUST IN
TIME!



OOPS!



SNE
SNE



MAH. ?!?



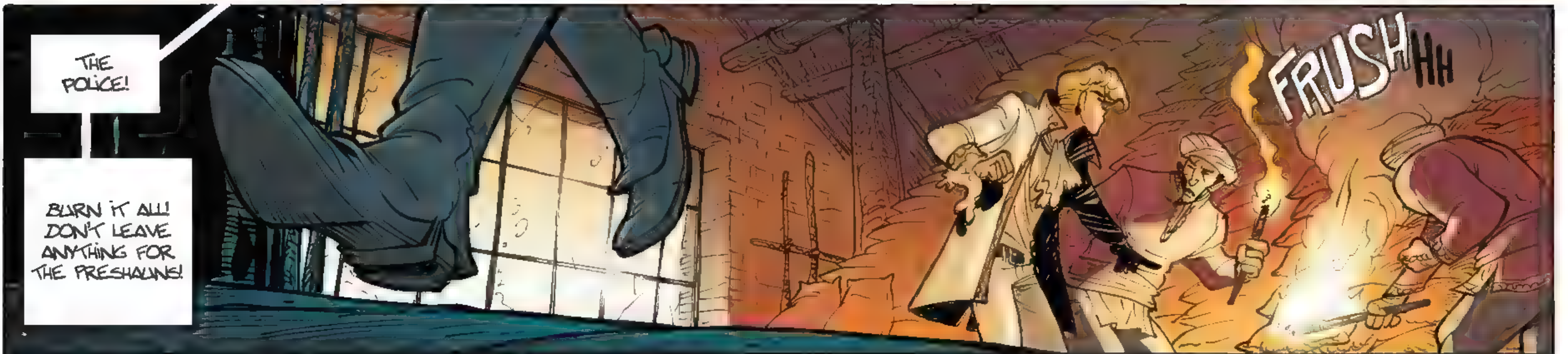
THE TEXTURE
OF THE SKIN
THAT LITTLE
TASTE OF PEAT...

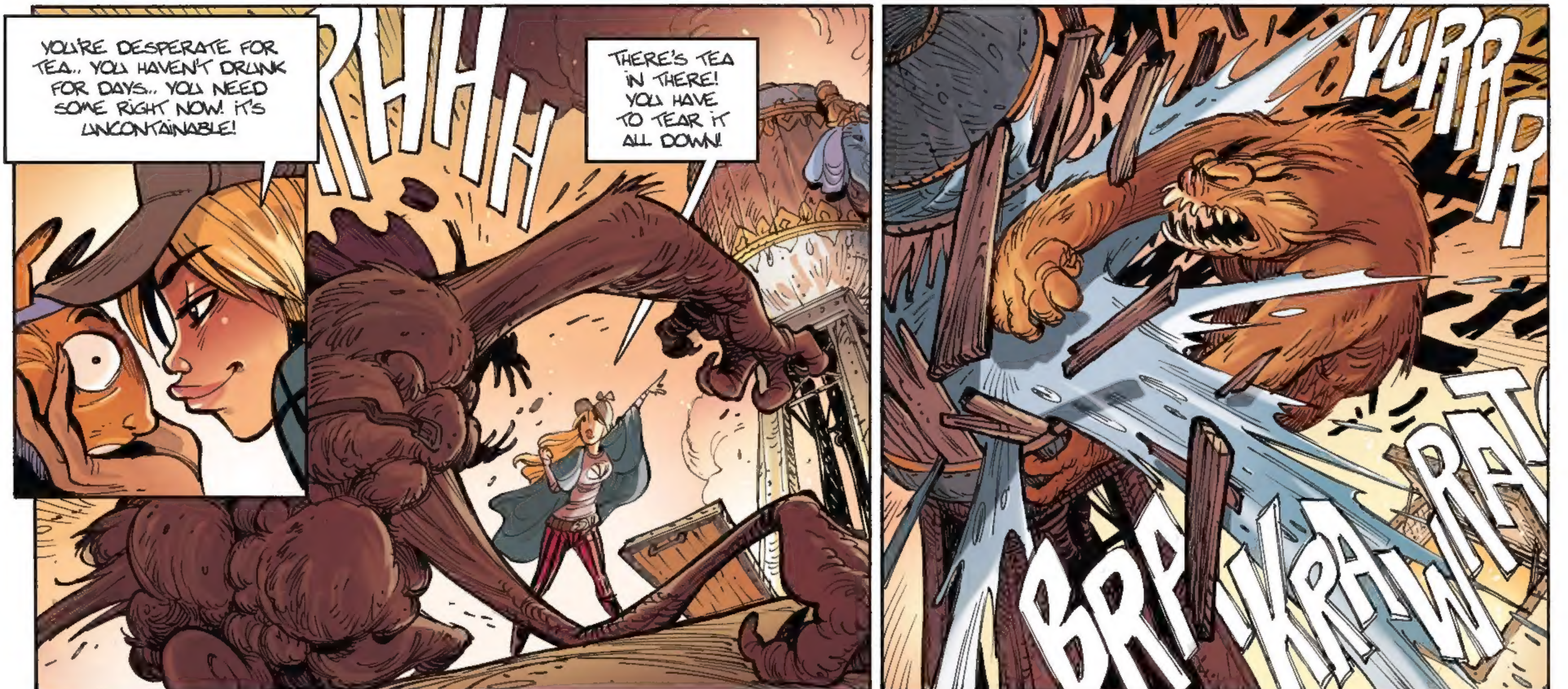
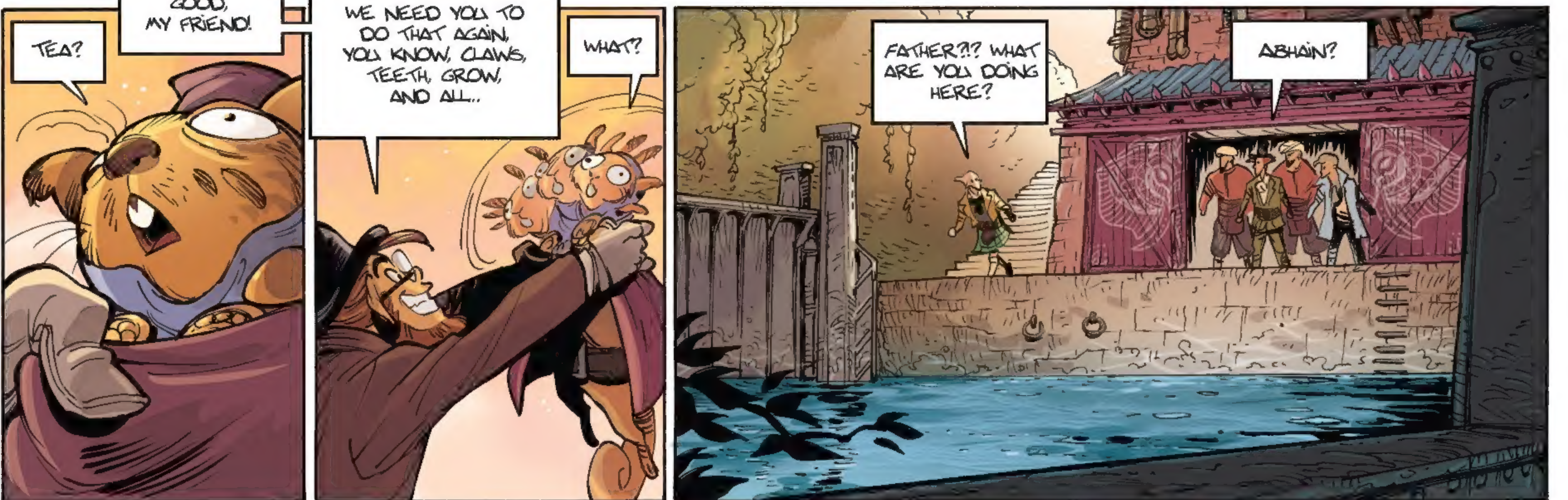
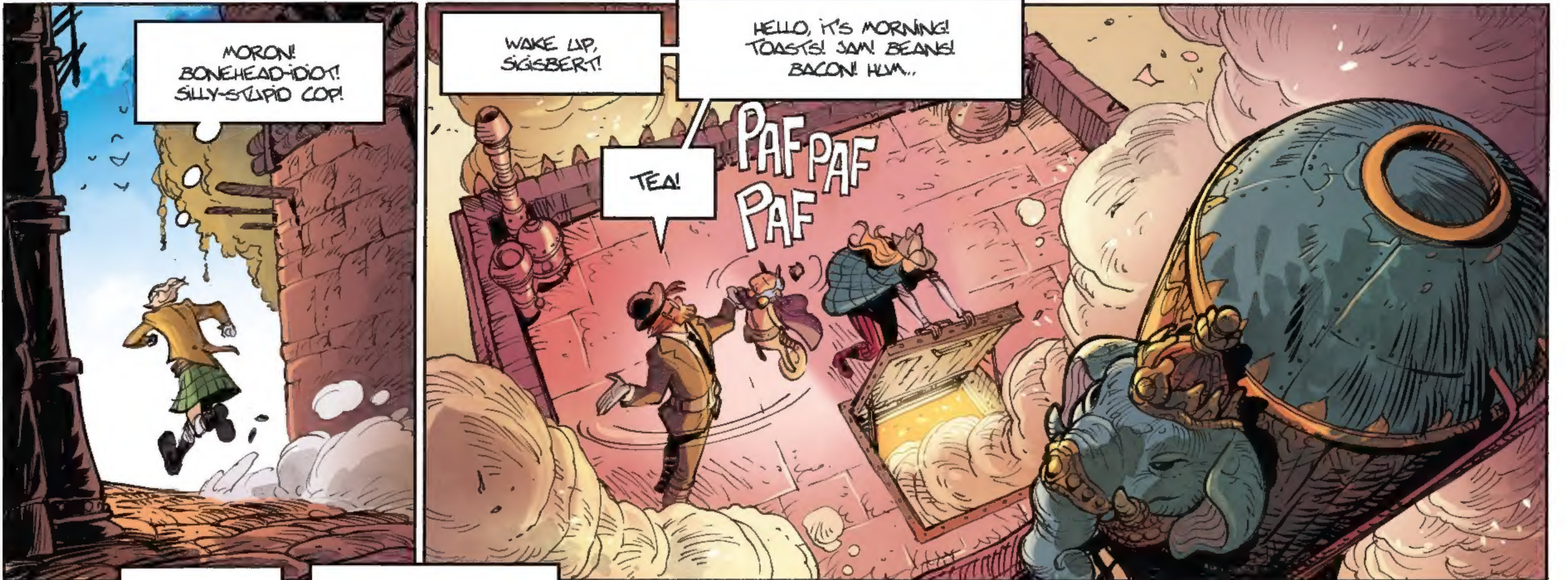
ANGALL
IS YOUR
BROTHER!

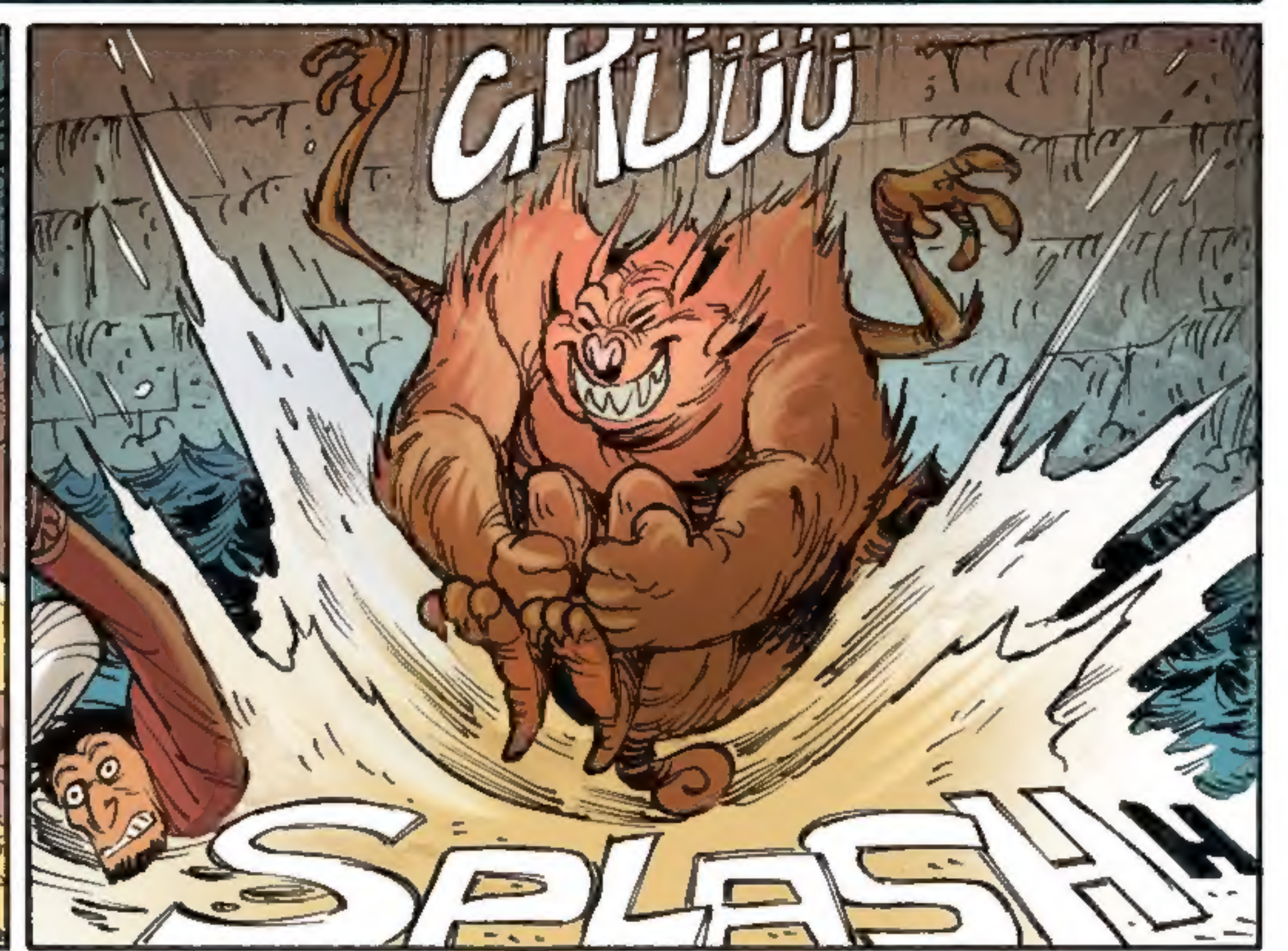
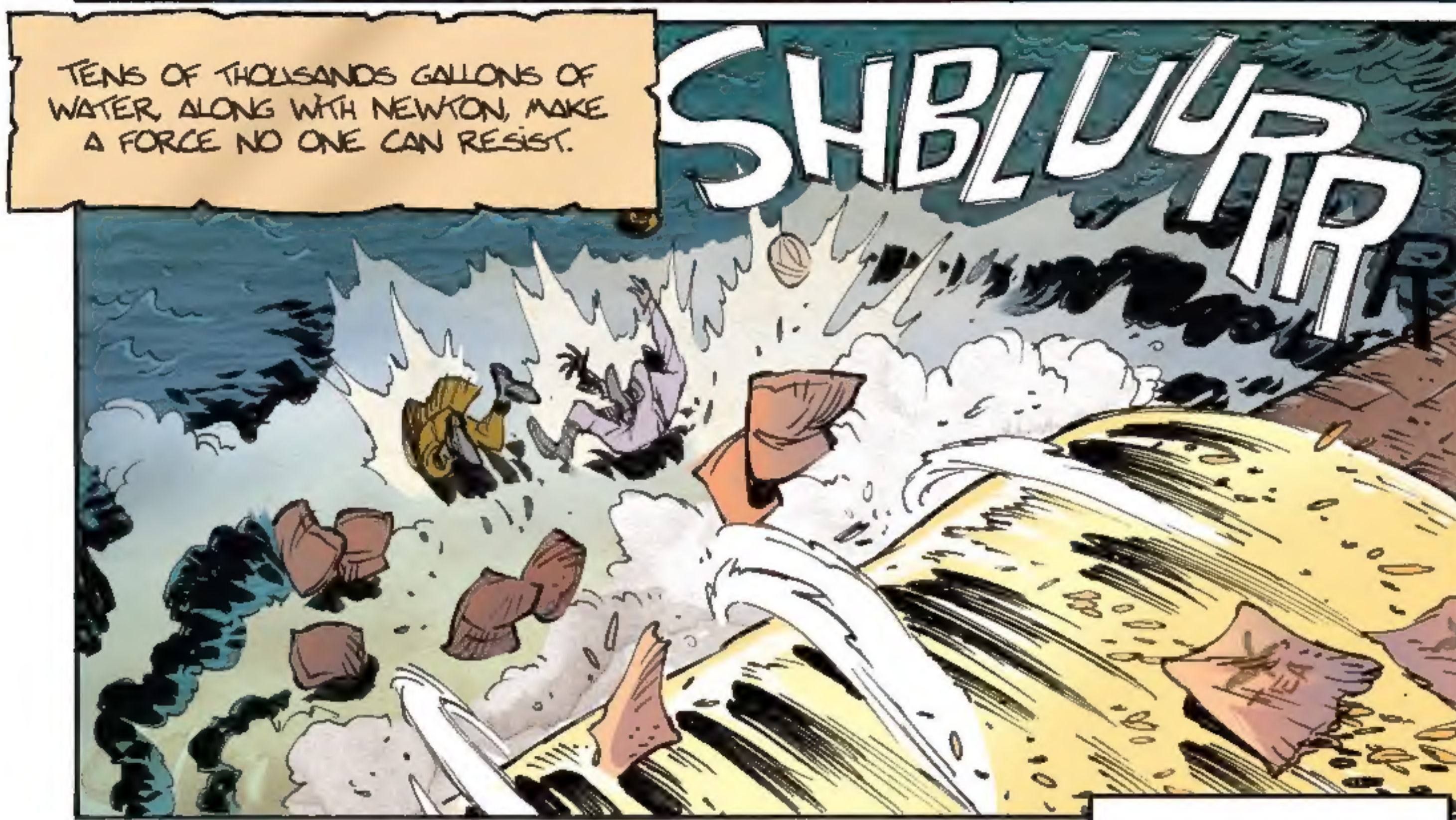
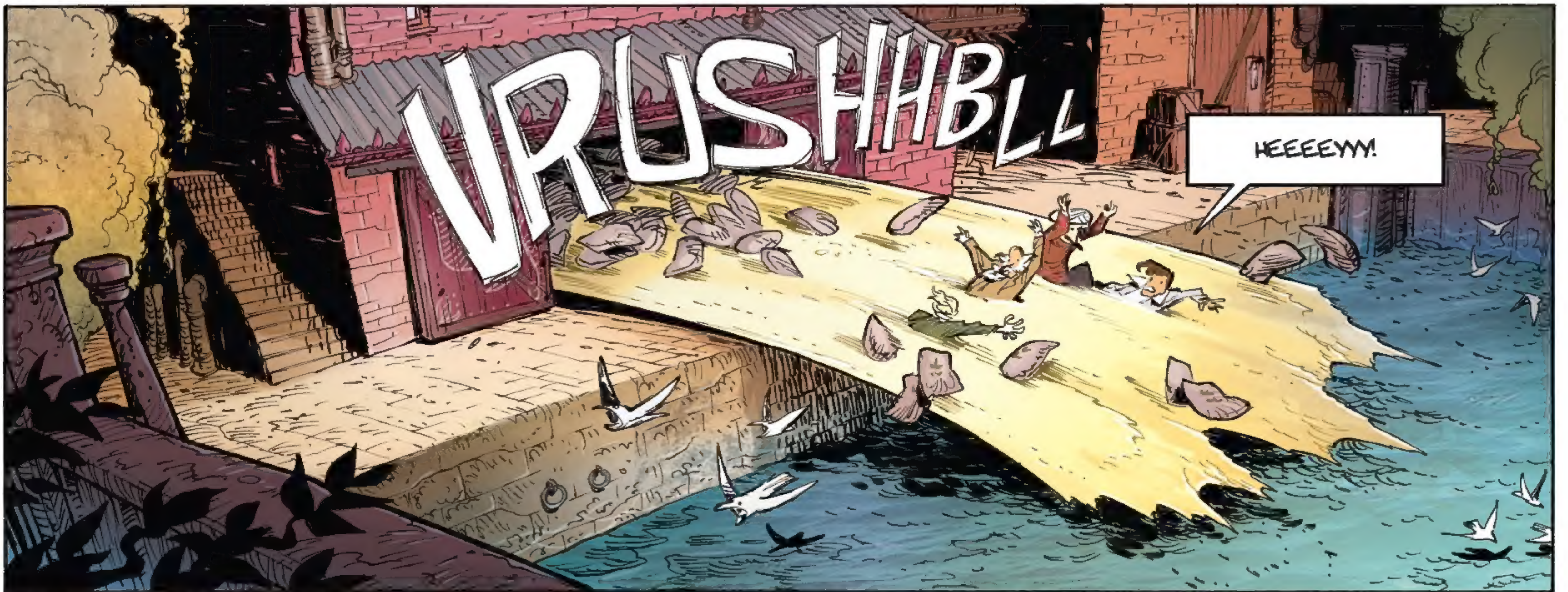
DO YOU
KNOW
ANGALL?



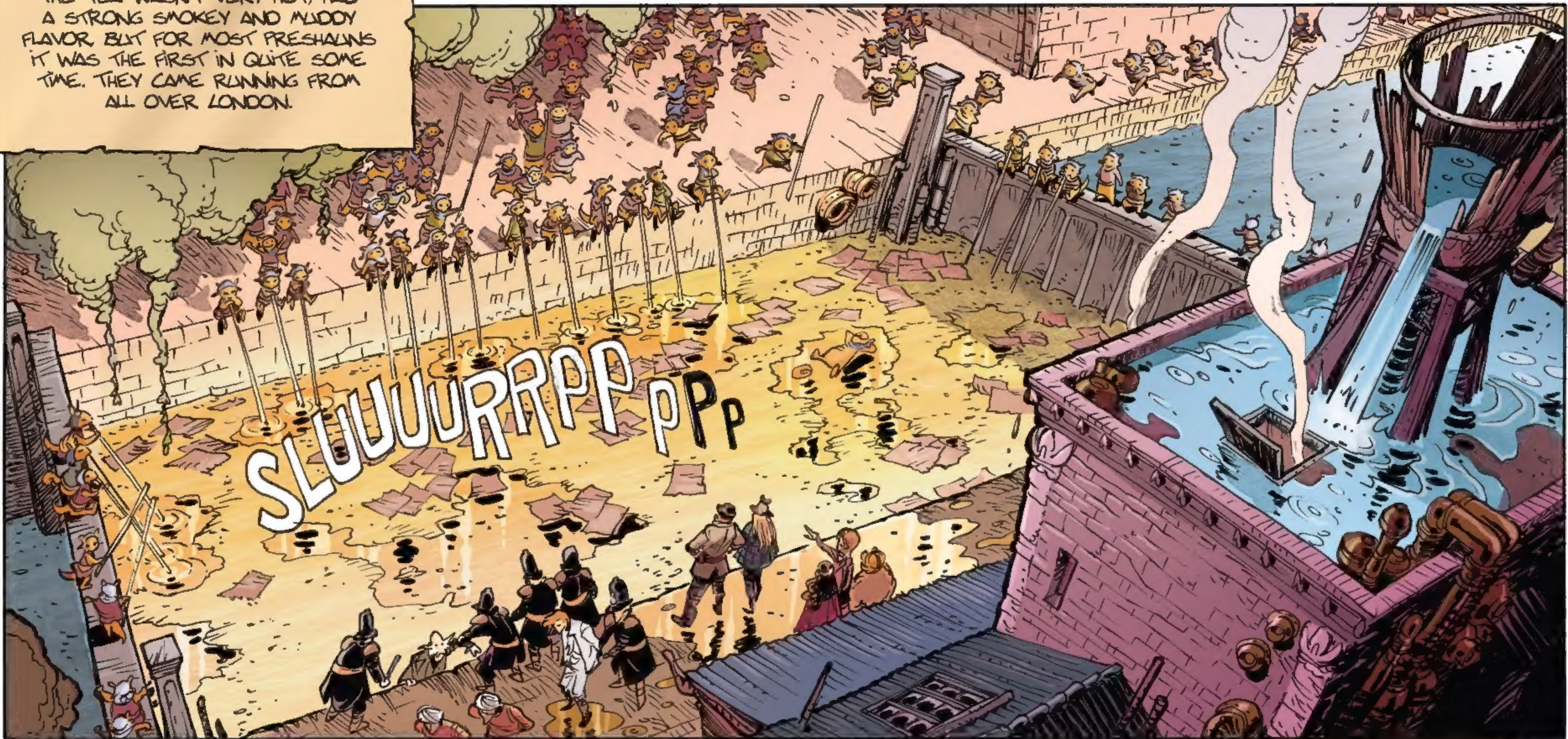
HE IS IN
THERE, WITH
THE CARGO!







THE TEA WASN'T VERY HOT, HAD A STRONG SMOKEY AND MUDDY FLAVOR BUT FOR MOST PRESHAUNS IT WAS THE FIRST IN QUITE SOME TIME. THEY CAME RUNNING FROM ALL OVER LONDON.



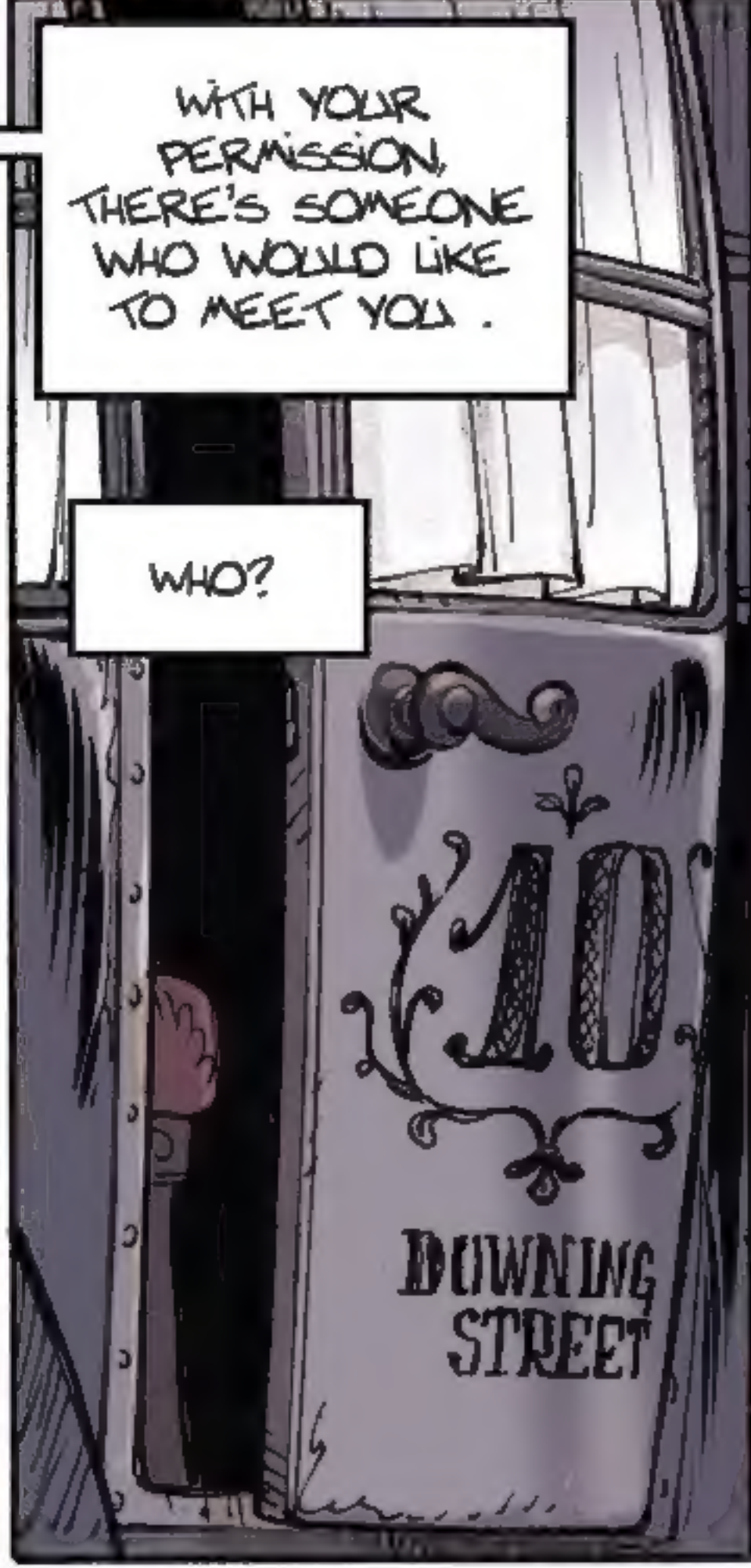
OH, HUM SO YOU SOMETIMES LEAVE YOUR DEN IN THE BIG BEN?



WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRE IT, MISS GRAYLE.

WITH YOUR PERMISSION, THERE'S SOMEONE WHO WOULD LIKE TO MEET YOU.

WHO?



LET HIM BE MYSTERIOUS, IT'S PART OF HIS JOB.

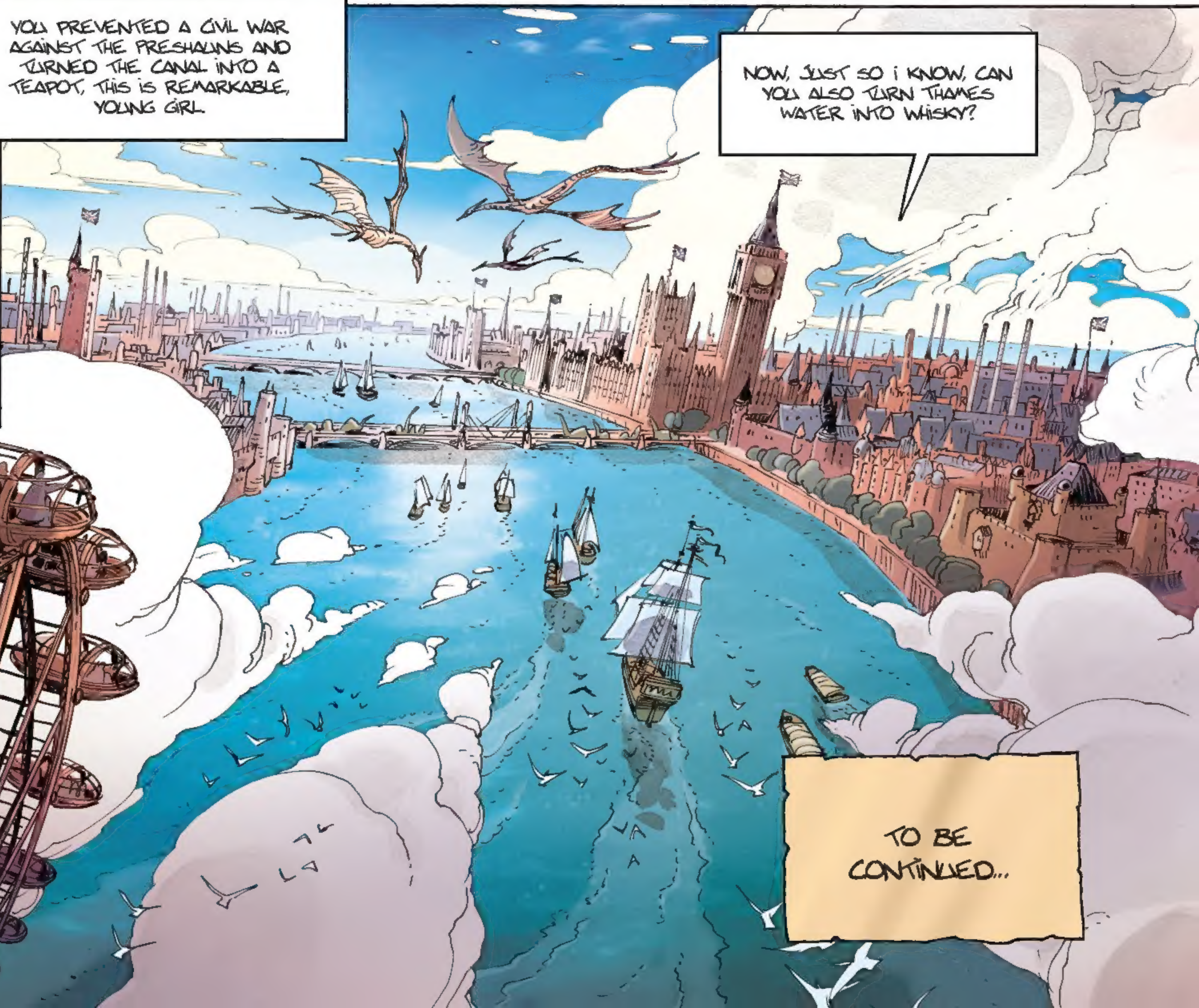


PRIME MINISTER...



YOU PREVENTED A CIVIL WAR AGAINST THE PRESHAUNS AND TURNED THE CANAL INTO A TEAPOT, THIS IS REMARKABLE, YOUNG GIRL.

NOW, JUST SO I KNOW, CAN YOU ALSO TURN THAMES WATER INTO WHISKY?



TO BE CONTINUED...



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Swinging London

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